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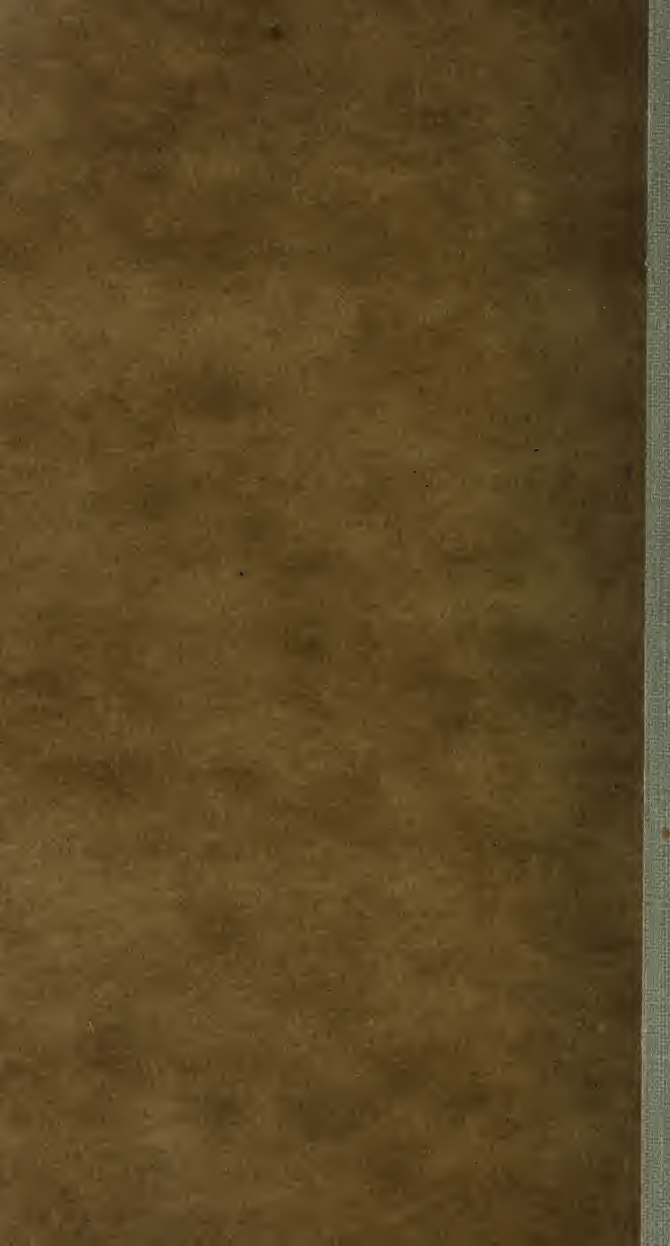
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RUTHVEN!!

Part 1st.—COURTYARD of a SPANISH POSADA.

The Wedding—the Unlucky Servant—the Lonely Traveller—Ten Louis for a Guide—More Travellers—a Pic-nic Party—STORMING the POSADA—the Unknown—the FEARFUL HISTORY of TORMENAR—the Expedition—Supper, Supper.

INTERIOR OF THE CASTLE OF TORMENAR.

THE GHOULE'S VICTIM—the Arrival of the Pic-nic at their Destinations—the Preparations for Supper—Fires Lighted—Room well Lit—Ghost Stories over Supper—SUDDEN and UNEXPECTED APPEARANCE of RUTHVEN—the ALARM—Supper Finished—a Resting Place for the Night—the DISCOVERY of the DEAD BODY—DEATH of JUANNA and RUTHVEN—RUTHVEN'S LAST REQUEST.

THE HEIGHTS OF TORMENAR.

THE MOONBEAMS. “Thanks, Gilbert, thou hast kept thy Oath.”

Part 2nd.—Gardens of the Chateau de Tiffanges.

A Sister's Love—the Return of Gilbert—the Betrothed—the Recognition and supposed Madness of Gilbert—the Marriage—INTERVIEW between the UNKNOWN and RUTHVEN—the Warning.

R U S T I C F E T H E

by MRS.

Part 3rd.—Bridal Chamber of Helene.

Love—the Faithful Servant—REVELATIONS—Too Late—the VAMPIRE'S BRIDE—the DEATH KISS—Arrival of Gilbert—the FALL from the TURRET.

THE TURRET MOAT—Discovery of the Body.

Part 4th.—An Apartment overlooking the Bay of Naples.

The UNKNOWN and her RIVAL—Gilbert and his Bride—the INTERVIEW and THREAT of the UNKNOWN—the STORM—Lazare out Fishing—the SACRIFICE of the UNKNOWN.

T H E C H A P E R ! !

ABDUCTION of ANTONIA—the VAMPIRE'S REVENGE—Midnight—the CHARMED AMULET.

DEATH OF RUTHVEN.

T H E A S C E N S I O N O F T H E G H O U L E !

THE LIME LIGHT BY MR. MORGAN.

RUTHVEN.



ACT FIRST.

SCENE FIRST.—*The Courtyard of a Spanish Posada. A gallery on the first floor—gates in C.—archways R. and L., leading into inner yards—a pump, plants, and small trees growing in the yard—mountains are seen through gates.*

At the rising of the curtain, the scene is all animation, GUESTS are continually arriving, welcomed by OTHERS, on the L. a MAN with a mandoline is leaning against the pump, attentively listened to by all. LAZARE is in the L., corner scraping some vegetables. BOTARO and PETRA enter surrounded by some FRIENDS.

LEGEND.

Sung by the MAN with the mandoline.

Stay, good Traveller, stay, nor venture so near
To yon old castle, which good people fear,
For no soul has dwelt there for many a day.
'Tis haunted by phantoms so legends say, so legends say.

CHORUS. Girls, boys, come dance, and merry be.

GIRLS dance to Chorus.

Stay, good traveller, stay, and list to my tale,
Smile not, 'tis true, nor at all do not rail;
Yet no mortal has dared those turrets to claim,
Nor would any one bear the ancestral name, ancestral name.

CHORUS, *as before.*

ROZA *enters*, R. 2 E.

ROZA. Come come, there's enough of dancing and singing

for the present, and before supper is ready, you may as well go and settle your rooms and beds, and make yourself comfortable.

LAZARE. (*still scraping vegetables—aside*) Make themselves comfortable! I doubt that, for they'll be all packed together like herrings.

ROZA. The day I marry my daughter, my inn for twenty-four hours dissolves itself into my mansion—so much the worse for the travellers. They were at liberty to come yesterday—they are again at liberty to come to-morrow. Those that were already installed of course I could not turn out; however, the only consisted of a solitary female, and a strange sort of female too—she's a Turk, or a Greek, or from some other of the landish place; besides, she's not very extravagant in her living—all she consumes is a few grains of rice daily.

BOTARO. Father-in-law, remember I have your word, that the day I married Petra, that sluggard Lazare should trot, and trot he must.

LAZARE. (*who has overheard BOTARO, comes between them,*) What, do you turn me out of doors?

ROZA. My son-in-law, you see, demands it.

LAZARE. I never spoke a dozen words to him in my life.

ROZA. But it seems he has remarked you have been forward with my daughter.

LAZARE. (*to BOTARO*) How? can you say you'd ever seen such a thing as that?

BOTARO. I said what I've said, and I've seen what I've seen.

LAZARE. I know what he means, because one day a little dust flew into the Senora Petra's eyes, and he just come in and I was blowing it out.

BOTARO. That will do! that will do!

LAZARE. Now, just ask your wife if I kissed her, and I'm sure she will say no! (*crosses R., to PETRA*) Now, did I kiss you.

ROZA. Come, there's quite enough of this—there's your wages, pack up your bundle and be off.

(*turns him round to L. corner*)

BOTARO. (*who has closed the gates*) So in, friends, in—supper will soon be ready!

Music.—All the GUESTS *exeunt*, R. 2 F. (*to LAZARE.*) As for you, eat, drink, fill yourself like a bullock for what I care, but mind, when we all retire for the night contrive you to find yourself on the other side of that gate.

LAZARE. Oh, certainly. (*to PETRA*) Good bye, senora! think some times of me, and if ever you wish to be the ruin of

RUTHVEN

A DRAMA

IN

FOUR ACTS

BY

A. HARRIS, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF

*Little Treasure—Too Much of a Good Thing—My Son Diana—
Doing the Hansom—Avalanche—Ruth Oakley.*

THOMAS HAILES LACY,
89, STRAND,
(Opposite Southampton Street, Covent Garden Market,)
LONDON.

RUTHVEN.

First Performed at the Royal Grecian Theatre, 1859.

GILBERT COUNT DE TIFFANGES	MR. SINCLAIR.
RUTHVEN	MR. T. MEAD.

The four following characters appear in the first act only.

MARQUIS MARINO	} (Travellers.)	{	MR. GILLETT.
COUNT D'IVRAY			MR. SMITHSON.
MONS. DE LAUROI			MR. GRANT.
MONSIEUR D'AUFER			MR. EDWARDS.
ROZA, an Innkeeper			MR. JACKSON.
BOTARO			MR. COURTLEY.
LAZARE			MR. MANNING.
GUILLIAME			MR. GROSVENOR
SCOPETTO			MR. COLEMAN.
MATTEO			MR. SMITHSON.
A SERVANT			MR. COSTELLO.

SERVANTS, PEASANTS, &c.

THE UNKNOWN OR GHOULE	MISS JANE COVENEY
THE COUNTESS D'IVRAY	} (Mute)
LOUISE	
CATHERINE	
JUANNA	MISS H. CORREY
HELENE	MISS A. CONQUEST.
ANTONIA (<i>in third act only.</i>)	MISS E. HALE

COSTUMES.

GILBERT.—Coloured coat and cape, grey pants, drab conical hat, hessian boots. *2nd dress*—Black coat with cape, white vest, pants, black hessian boots, travelling cloak, with hood.

MARQUIS, COUNT, LAUROI, D'AUFER.—Ibid, in various colours.

RUTHVEN.—Black velvet suit of period, large cloak, conical hat.

BOTARO.—Ibid, trimmed with silver, blue silk stockings, shoes and buckles.

LAZARE.—Net cap, brown Spanish suit of period, blue stockings, shoes drab felt conical shaped hat. *2nd dress*—Blue jacket, red under vest, blue (full) trunks, gaiters only to cover calf of leg, conical hat.

SCOPETTO, MATEO.—Striped shirts, petticoat trousers, belts, net caps.

GUILLAUME, SERVANTS.—Old-fashioned liveries.

GHOULE.—White drapery, white cloth for head dress, so as to hide every portion of hair.

COUNTESS, LOUISE, CATHERINE.—The same as Juanna, in various colour.

JUANNA.—Green velvet dress of period, a long black veil, fastened to the back of head.

HELENE.—White lace dress, straw hat, trimmed with flowers. *2nd dress*—White satin, white wreath.

ANTONIA.—White dress. *2nd dress*—White wreath and long veil.

UNKNOWN.—*2nd dress*—Grey petticoat, dark body, red handkerchief to cover head. *3rd dress*—Greek dress.

any one, only let them try and blow some dust out of your eye, and then—

BOTARO. (*taking PETRA'S arm, and hurrying her off L.*) Idiot! (*music.*)

LAZARE. (*calling after him*) Thank you! What an infamous conspiracy, to turn an innocent young being like me out in the middle of the night, on a road surrounded by high mountains inhabited by goblins! (*music*) and when I think that I shall be all alone on the high road, and that I have only to turn round to see the Castle of Tormenar, which seems to glare down upon the traveller from its height through its large windows, which appear like two flaming eyes!

Goes into R. corner before he speaks, turns, and starts on perceiving the UNKNOWN, who has just entered the balcony, half her face being covered.

Holloa! there's our strange acquaintance who exists upon the ice. What a strange look she has got—it makes me feel chilly all over. (*whip and bells—ringing at the gate*) Ring away! who's it, I wonder, though? 'Gad! perhaps some traveller who requires a *valet de sham*, which kind fortune has sent to my aid. (*music.—Goes and opens gate*) A traveller—yes, but one of the opposite sex.

Enter JUANNA, C.

She pays a MULETEER, who has followed her—he exits, C.

JUANNA. This is an inn, is it not?

LAZARE. Why yes, senora, it is a sort of inn—it was one yesterday, and it will be one again to-morrow.

JUANNA. I have no intention of stopping here—I require but a guide.

LAZARE. Then I'm your man.

JUANNA. Thank Heaven! then we can start at once! I cannot delay a moment; before nightfall we must reach the Castle of Tormenar.

LAZARE. (*starting*) The Castle of Tormenar!

JUANNA. It is near here, is it not?

LAZARE. Much too near, but you'll not catch me there.

JUANNA. Why not?

LAZARE. Why not? why, because an honest Christian does not even pronounce its name without a shudder.

JUANNA. But should I have business there!

LAZARE. (*getting round stage into R. corner in front*) Why, it's uninhabited—it's in ruins, and the only beings you'd find there to transact any business with would be reptiles and phantoms.

JUANNA. (L.) In that case, instead of one piastre for your trouble, I will give you ten.

LAZARE. (R.) Not for a hundred!

JUANNA. (*going up stage*) Perhaps some other guide may be found more courageous and less interested.

LAZARE. With all my heart, senora; and I'll help you find him. (*calling off*) Here, I say, some of you—here, you were wanted.

Enter several of the GUESTS, R. 2 E.

Will any of you be this lady's guide? she'll give ten piastres!

ALL. (*coming forward*) I will—I will! &c.

LAZARE. You'll have to show her the way to Tormer's though.

ALL. (*shrinking back*) Oh!

LAZARE. Come, now, don't quarrel among yourselves who is to be, or the lady will be at a loss who to choose—now any of ye going to accept?

ALL. Of course not!

JUANNA. (*aside*) Good Heaven! he will have arrived and believe I have not kept him faith.

(*Music*) GILBERT and TRAVELLERS appear outside the gate.

VOICES. House, there—house! (*bell rung violently*)

Enter ROZA, BOTARO, and PETRA, hastily, L.

ROZA. What's all this noise at the gate? more travellers!

BOTARO. It seems we shall not have a moment's peace to eat the wedding supper.

ROZA. Run and tell them, Lazare, there's no room.

LAZARE. (*having lit a cigarette, sits down L.*) You forget, father Roza, I no longer form a branch of your establishment.

GILBERT. (*ringing the bell violently*) Do you intend to open or not?

ROZA. Why, senor, there can be no use of our opening the gate to you, as we have no accommodation—we are too full already.

GILBERT. A lame excuse! We comprise a party of twelve who have started for a romantic *partie de campagne*; besides we have four ladies with us—surely you would not let them pass the night by starlight. You refuse then to open the gate?

ROZA. Most firmly.

GILBERT. Indeed—but if you don't open these gates, we intend to knock them down.

ROZA. Knock them down! commit burglary!

(BOTARO turns up stage.)

GILBERT. My good landlord, do you refuse again? if so, I take the law in my own hands. Is it to be or not? Once—twice—thrice! no answer! Well, then, gentlemen, to the attack! (*Music*) and let us take the Posado by storm.

TRAVELLERS are seen to lean against the gates—gates come down with a crash—ROZA, BOTARO, PETRA, and GUESTS get into corner, alarmed.

Enter GILBERT, COUNT and COUNTESS D'IVRAY, MARQUIS and MARCHIONESS MARINO, MONSIEUR D'AUFER, and MONSIEUR DE LAUROI, C. Two SERVANTS in livery leading a mule, which has two baskets slung over her back, and several rifles.

GILBERT. The stronghold being ours, and the enemy having capitulated, walk in, ladies, walk in.

LAZARE. That's the style of master for me.

ROZA. (R., with PEASANTS) I can assure you, senor, there is not a corner in the whole house. I marry my daughter to-day, and in consequence have two distinct sets of relations to provide for. Here are my brothers and sisters, and uncles and aunts.

GILBERT. (C., laughing) Ah! well, it seems that you are provided with a plentiful supply of the article of relations. (*perceiving UNKNOWN, who has remained on balcony, and whose gaze has been fixed on him since he entered*) Does she form part of the commodity.

(going to ROZA, R.)

ROZA. Oh no, it's an outlandish lady that has been here these three days, and of course, you know, I could not turn her out.

GILBERT. (returning to C.) A strange, sinister countenance!

UNKNOWN. (*who has had her eyes fixed on GILBERT since his entrance*) He is handsome!

GILBERT. Come, since you have changed your tone, and speak a little civilly, I am open to be convinced that there really is no room. What can we do, Ladies? we have already taxed your strength a great deal to-day. (*turning to ROZA*) Surely there must be some other posada in the neighbourhood, or some old chateau, where we could find shelter for the night.

BOTARO. (R. corner) Well, signor, we can't deny that there is a chateau in the neighbourhood.

GILBERT. So much the better!

ROZA. So much the worse, I say, for if you ever went there once, you'd never come back.

GILBERT. Why? is it inhabited by an ogre, who would swallow me up?

ROZA. That I don't know, senor, but when any one ventures there, some one or other settles their business for them.

GILBERT. Quite a romantic legend!

ROZA. Three years ago, an English gentleman, a foolhardy stripling, would pass the night there; the next morning he was found nearly dashed to pieces among the rocks, his heart open and stone cold.

GILBERT. Indeed!

ROZA. Why, only last year two captains of the garrison of Seville, a young man about twenty-five, and another about fifty or sixty, went out of Aravura to Tormenar; (that's the name of the place) through fatigue they fell asleep side by side. The next day the old one came back haggard and nearly maniac, for on awaking he found his companion laying by his side dead, with a small wound in the artery of his throat. It is quite true—everybody here present, I am sure, must have seen it.

LAZARE. I saw him buried—oh, bu-r-i-e-d!

JUANNA. Good heaven!

GILBERT. What does it prove? But that the place is inhabited by robbers and cut throats, like most places in this beautiful country of yours.

ROZA. There you are wrong, senor, for the young Englishman had his rings still on his fingers, and a well filled purse was found in the pockets of the officer.

GILBERT. What say you, gentlemen, to these fine tales?

MARQUIS. Why, count, why—

GILBERT. If you had no greater fear than I have, we'd pay a visit to this Tormenar, that's the name I believe, and see if we should be dashed over the rocks, or have our veins opened. What says our little army? we have six pistols, four rifles, and enough ammunition to last us for half an hour. Is Tormenar our destination or not?

ALL. Ay, Tormenar!

LAZARE. What noodles! (to JUANNA) I say, senora, you're in luck's way—here's not only a guide for you, but a whole party to keep you company.

JUANNA. (*advancing to GILBERT, L. C.*) Senor cavalier!

GILBERT. (*R. C.*) Senora.

JUANNA. Might I beg a few moments' conversation?

GILBERT. I am all attention.

Music—EVERYBODY retires to back, except GILBERT and

JUANNA.

JUANNA. I believe you are about to visit the chateau of Tormenar. Might I entreat you to let me join your party?

GILBERT. But have you heard the stories of our worthy host

JUANA. Senor, what could I have to fear in such company yours.

GILBERT. Senora, I am convinced our ladies will be delighted with the acquisition. What did the host say, that Tormenar brought ill-luck—in my case, at least, there must be an exception.

JUANA. I have, then, the honour to address—

GILBERT. Count Gilbert de Tiffanges, and your most devoted slave—

JUANA. Count, I am the youngest daughter of the Marquis de Tarillas—my father had placed me in the Convent de Huescana, in order to prevent my marriage with Don Luis de Rigoro, who is devotedly attached to me, and to whom I am affianced before heaven. A few days since, I received a letter from Don Luis appointing to meet me at the Castle of Tormenar. I answered him that wherever he went I should follow—and named this evening for our meeting; yesterday, by aid of the superior (who is an old friend), I escaped from the convent—as soon as I reach Don Luis we will try and gain the nearest port, and then immediately set sail for America. That, count, is the reason why I have begged of you to let me join your party, and once at Tormenar, Don Luis will, in person, thank you for having brought him his affianced bride. I am now convinced that I have spoken to a loyal cavalier who will respect the position in which I am placed.

GILBERT. Senora, I have left a sister in Brittany whom I dearly love, she is about to be wedded to a noble heart, but should she ever need a friend or protector I trust she will but meet one to offer her such a sincere and disinterested friendship as that I now tender you, and which, I trust, may be soon put to the test.. Come, senora, deign to accept my arm; if to merit the gratitude of Don Luis is but to be your affectionate brother and stern defender, before many hours are past, believe me, senora, I shall have gained it. (*introduces her to the TRAVELLERS*) Come, gentlemen, let us prepare for our departure. (*they retire up stage, L.*) Now, Master Host, if you have not rooms to accommodate, you cannot deny you have not provisions to satisfy us, for the smell that comes from your kitchen larder is quite enticing.

ROZA. Well, then, senor, come in and take your choice—it's impossible to refuse you anything, you have such winning ways.

GILBERT. (C.—to SERVANTS) I shall leave that to you!

LAZARE. I only wish he'd left the choice of his viands to me,
Exit ROZA, &c., R., followed by SERVANTS, who take the panniers off the mules with them.

wouldn't I have left the bridal party a supper! Vengeance is sweet!

GILBERT. Now, Marquis Marino, and you, count, to the Avant Garde, the rest with the ladies will occupy the centre, and if you permit, senora, we will bring up the rear. How long does it take to reach the renowned spot?

BOTARO. (R.) About an hour and a half hard walking.

GILBERT. It will be but a pleasant promenade, and we shall arrive there before the rain. Come, senora, in an hour and a half I shall have the pleasure of handing you over to Don Luis—his charming bride.

LAZARE. Yes, and in a couple of hours they'll all have their necks wrung, just in the way I did the chickens this morning.

Enter ROZA and SERVANTS, with the well filled panniers, which they sling over the back of the mule.

GILBERT. (goes to L. corner) Bravo! Host, it seems you have kept your word, and there! (throwing a purse) You will find enough to repay the trouble and annoyance we have given you. Now, gentlemen, forward for Tormenar!

Music—Exeunt GILBERT, JUANNA, and all the TRAVELLERS. through D.

ROZA. (closing gates) And now, friends, supper.

BOTARO. At last! better late than never!

GUESTS. Ay, supper, supper!

Music—EVERYBODY exits through arch, L.

UNKNOWN. It will take thee two hours, Juanna, before you can be in the arms of your affianced husband—he shall be in mine long ere that.

Music—The UNKNOWN sinks through balcony, and through stage, and the whole changes to

SCENE SECOND.—Partly Dilapidated Chamber or Hall, in the Castle of Tormenar. A large Gothic window, R. C. in flat—large double doors, L. U. E., one door hanging, an old large Gothic fireplace, the arms of Tormenar over it sculptured in C.—two small doors, R. 2 E. and L. 2 E. The scene is enclosed—it has also a ceiling, from which cobwebs are hanging—several old family paintings and tapestry, hardly perceptible for dust, about the wall. Old fashioned dilapidated furniture, which rises on traps as scene changes. Distant thunder—lightning is seen through the large window.

Music—Eleven is heard to strike by a distant village clock—the UNKNOWN rushes on from the chamber, L., her head is without covering, her long black hair, hanging down her back—she casts a glance into the chamber, and then closes the door.

UNKNOWN. He was young and handsome—no matter, I have more a new lease of existence! Gilbert, it is thou that art next doomed.

(*Music—VOICES heard, L.—she listens anxiously.*)

GILBERT. (*without*) This way, senora. Mind, there are a few more steps.

(*the UNKNOWN, on hearing GILBERT's voice, rushes to window, throws herself from balcony, and is seen to float away in the air*)

Enter GILBERT, JUANNA, TRAVELLERS, and TWO SERVANTS from door, L.U.E.—the latter carry the two hampers, which they place down, L.—one SERVANT then exits, door R.—GILBERT gives the torch which he has in his hand to the other SERVANT.

Well, senora—well, companions in arms—I do not think we can find anything better than this for a dining room.

SERVANTS enter, L. U. E., with a couple of old chairs, which the TRAVELLERS begin to break up and put ready in chimney to light, another strikes a light, while a third takes a newspaper from his pocket, and sets fire to the fragments of the chairs—a bright fire soon blazes up.

And now for the provisions!

Two of the TRAVELLERS enter with a table, D. L. U. E.

And see, our wishes are anticipated—a fine piece of old furniture.

Enter SERVANTS, with chairs, D. L. U. E.

Chairs too why, we are more likely in the habitation of some kind fairy, than an old haunted turret. But, senora, why look with such dread around?

JUANNA. Did you not hear it strike eleven as we entered these dark portals?

GILBERT. Certainly, it was eleven.

JUANNA. And Don Luis is not arrived!

GILBERT. The late rains have made the roads hardly practicable; besides, he bears a brave sword, and has no fear of robbers!

JUANNA. Ay, count, but there are dangers against which mortal power has no defence!

GILBERT. What, senora, can you speak thus—you, who but half an hour since braved with such heart the fury of the storm and the dangers of the road we have passed.

JUANNA. True, but for some minutes, ever since I have passed the threshold of this place, I have felt an unwilling dread

creep over me—I feel choked—I dare not breathe; and seems if I uttered a cry, I should bring down on my head so awful disaster. I will not disguise it, count, I am afraid of this place.

GILBERT. Accursed be these walls, that can inspire you with such feeling.

JUANNA. Oh, that Don Luis were but here to join me in my heartfelt and sincere thanks to you, count.

(during the above, the SERVANTS have laid the cloth, and placed several lighted candles on table—the fire, which a TRAVELLER has been fanning with his hat, burns brightly up—the LADIES are sitting before fire drying the clothes)

GILBERT. Now, ladies, if you have sufficiently dried your mantillas, we'll commence operations on the supper, which has a very inviting aspect.

(the SERVANTS have laid the supper, and arranged chairs and stools of all sizes round the table)

ALL. Supper, supper!

GILBERT. Mind that we keep a place vacant next to the senora. *(to JUANNA)* You know who for?

JUANNA. *(taking GILBERT's hand)* Thanks—thanks!

GILBERT. Be assured, friends, the fowls will be more tender, and the wine will have a finer flavour here in our rude way, than if we had joined the bridal supper down below. Permit me, senora, to offer a little of this patê—it looks exquisite.

JUANNA. Pray, count, excuse me, I cannot eat a morsel of anything. Believe me, I sincerely grieve to so unwillingly cast a gloom over your jovial party.

GILBERT. Mention it not, my dear sister, but what say you to our illumination, which, peering from this old turret window, will serve as a beacon to the traveller below?

MARQUIS. At least, if there be any phantoms here, we shall be able to get a glimpse of them.

COUNT. Well, then, you must believe in supernatural beings, such as sylphs, will-o'-the-wisps, ghoulies, vampires, &c.—rustic superstition merely.

JUANNA. Nay, rail not at it, count, I have much faith in such superstitions

MARQUIS. Those who have travelled will find the superstition change with the character of the country—in some places it is a good spirit—in others an inoffensive will-o'-the-wisp, whilst in others it becomes the female spectre bearing the form of youth and beauty to more easily entice victims into their grasp, which they destroy by drinking their blood.

JUANNA. Horrible!

GILBERT. Nay, if the senora had read our poet, Gallau, he tells the story of a ghoul, who, having married a young nobleman, never touched food, but a few grains of rice. Having followed her one night, he was unwillingly obliged to witness one of the sanguinary repasts which the marquis has just explained.

D'LAURIO. The existence of ghoul's my dear Gilbert, in spite of all your poets may write about them, has never been an authenticated fact. Now, as regards vampires, I myself have every reason to believe the romance more truthful.

GILBERT. Did you ever meet with one, then?

D'LAURIO. Not exactly, but in my last journey to Peru, I lodged in a house which a vampire had once honoured with his presence. It was that of a rich Jew broker, there were many daughters, amongst whom was an adorable young creature of between sixteen and seventeen years of age. I saw her portrait, and she must have been a marvel of beauty.

JUANNA. (to GILBERT) This narrative chills my very blood.

ALL. Oh, go on—go on!

D'LAURIO. Well, then, at night, when all had retired to rest, and the moon was hid behind the dark clouds, on the stroke of midnight. (*midnight commences to strike—(Music)*)

COUNT. Just the thing, for midnight is striking now.

GILBERT. (to JUANNA.) Fear nothing, dear sister, am I not by your side?

D'LAURIO. A sort of noise like the whistling winds was heard in the corridors, an unearthly light seemed to illumine them, and on the last stroke of the clock, the door opened, and slowly the pale and lurid form of the vampire stood before—

On the last stroke of the clock RUTHVEN appears at the door,

L.U.E., a simultaneous cry is given by all—the GENTLEMEN rush to their arms, and the LADIES run to corner in alarm—a pause.

TRAVELLERS. (*together*) Who are you?

GILBERT. What seek you here?

RUTHVEN. (*down L. C.*) Ladies, a thousand pardons! gentlemen, you ask me who I am—why, a traveller like yourselves; sent from the hostelry of Senor Roza, who to-night gives a wedding supper—I learnt that a joyous party had bravely gone up to Tormenor, and, guided by the light that beamed from yonder window, I followed. What I seek is shelter, like yourselves, and all I have to beg is that you will allow me to join this convivial circle. I have brought both arms and provision s

Gentlemen, lay aside your arms, I beg. My name is Lord Ruthven, Peer of England and Scotland, and your most obedient servant. Ladies, pray receive my sincere apology for not having sent in my name first, but the fact is, I found no one in the ante-chamber to deliver it.

GILBERT. Nay, 'tis we, my lord, who have to beg your indulgence for the strange reception we gave you; but you arrived so suddenly and unexpectedly, and at such an hour, that I must confess you did in some way startle the ladies. (*turning to JUANNA*) Nay, dear senora, believe me you have nothing to fear.

RUTHVEN *now perceives JUANNA, he fixes his eyes upon her with a steadfast look, and does not take them off during the whole scene.*

RUTHVEN, (*crosses to table, R., advancing to JUANNA*) Indeed, I am greatly vexed that I should have been the cause of chasing the bright colour from this fair lady's cheek.

JUANNA. (*shrinking under his gaze*) In truth, my lord, your unexpected appearance at such a moment, in the middle of such a story—

RUTHVEN. I, then, interrupted one of these gentlemen in the recital of some interesting tale?

GILBERT. They were but amusing the ladies with the legend—

RUTHVEN. A legend!

D'LAURIO. Of a vampire!

RUTHVEN. Of a vampire?

D'LAURIO. I was but telling the ladies that in Hungary it was a common incident to hear mention of these beings.

RUTHVEN. Doubtless! but very uncommon ever to chance to meet with one. I have travelled in Hungary, ladies, and although a great sight seeker, have never been able to get a glimpse at such a supernatural object.

MARQUIS. But surely you must have heard mention—

RUTHVEN. Excuse me, senor, but I am convinced these ladies would far prefer some other theme of conversation.

GILBERT. No doubt, my lord; but I believe you stated you had both arms and provisions; I do not see them.

RUTHVEN. They are in charge of my valet, whom I left struggling with the mule at the gate. Come, Lazare, this way—here!

Music—Enter LAZARE, D. L. U. E., carrying a rifle and a basket.

LAZARE. Here I am, master—that is, all that is left of me. I really could not believe a man could be so courageous as not to die of fright.

GILBERT. Why, I declare, it's that poltroon, Lazare!

LAZARE. Can you consider where I am, and call me a poltroon? Well, I declare! there they are, all alive and kicking!

JUANNA. My good friend!

LAZARE. Ah, senora—so here you are!

JUANNA. Did no other person call at the hostelry, except your master?

LAZARE. Not a living soul. If there had, believe me, it's ten to one I should not be serving whom I am now!

(RUTHVEN is seated, after being invited—his gaze is fixed on
JUANNA, who has resumed her seat)

COUNT. You do not eat, my lord.

RUTHVEN. The fact is, the cold has taken away all my appetite.

LAZARE. I should only wonder if any one could have any appetite up here!

COUNT. Why not? I see no difference between this castle and any other.

LAZARE. That's because you don't know what once took place here.

GILBERT. What, at Tormenar?

COUNT. Well, then, as each person has told some tale or other, we'll now here that of Lazare's.

LAZARE. What, tell the story of Tormenar at Tormenar! Catch me at it!

GILBERT. Why not?

LAZARE. Why not? Why, because before it was half over, some hobgoblins would come down the chimney, or through the keyhole, and tell me to mind my own business.

COUNT. Come, a few mouthfulls of wine will give you confidence. (*gives tumbler*)

LAZARE. That I won't refuse. (*drinks*) Well, that's not so bad—I can feel it creep through all my veins. I am sure another glass or so would make me do anything—even tell the fearful narrative.

GILBERT. (*giving him a tumbler in the other hand, and filling it*) Fortify yourself, then, and commence.

LAZARE. Thank you. Well, then, her goes. Once upon a time—another drop if you please.

COUNT. There, take the bottle. (*gives him the bottle, so does GILBERT—LAZARE remains with a tumbler in each hand, and a bottle under each arm*)

LAZARE. Just the thing, senor—I then shall be able to add fuel to the fire, when it gets low. As I have already remarked, ladies and gentlemen, once upon a time, there was a Baron of Tormenar—well, this Baron of Tormenar was a great rogue,

and one fine day invited his two elder brothers to take pot luck with him. He prepared a grand fête, and had everything arranged just as if he expected them.

GILBERT. (*who has resumed his seat*) But if he had invited them, of course he expected them.

LAZARE. Not a bit—for he never expected them when he invited them.

GILBERT. How can that be?

LAZARE. Why, because he had taken good care they should never arrive, for he had arranged that their throats should be cut on the road; he therefore inherited all their property, as he had both them and their children murdered.

COUNT. This is the first we hear of the children!

LAZARE. Oh, I forgot them. Well, never mind—he therefore inherited the three castles.

GILBERT. Two you mean, as one belonged to him already.

LAZARE. Of course; but it was fated he never was to enjoy his illgotten wealth, for each time he went to sit at table, the shadow of one of his brothers, with his throat cut, sat opposite him, and when he wanted to go to bed he found the shadow of the other tucked up under the clothes there before him.

RUTHVEN. (*R. of table—laughing to GUESTS*) I seems I have found a perfect gem of a servant—he's worth his money, were it only to listen to his stories.

LAZARE. The senor has an amazing susceptibility. So our Baron of Tormenar, not daring to visit any of his castles, and no doubt, having no other castle to go to except his his three castles, made up, all at once, his mind to become religious; so he confessed his sins, made a monk of himself, and died in holy sanctity, leaving a nephew, twenty times removed, heir to the property. Since that time, the castle has been abandoned, and has fallen in ruins, and if ever, by chance, any travellers attempted to pass the night in it, the next morning one or two were safe to be found done for.

RUTHVEN. (*seated R. of table*) In that case, I run the greatest risk.

GILBERT. Why so, my lord?

RUTHVEN. Why, generally the last comer is the doomed one, and as I was the last to enter the castle. If any harm is to happen, I suppose the pefeience will be given to me.

LAZARE. (*starting all at once*) Oh, good gracious! Oh, lord, it was me—I who came last—I am the doomed one! What an ass I am to tell stories to frighten myself out of my wits.

GILBERT. (*rising from table*) (But come, you have not told us all.

LAZARE. I think I've said quite enough.

GILBERT. But this nephew, twenty times removed, whom you spoke of—why does he not visit the place, and have it put in some repair.

LAZARE. Why, because he'd rather not, for they whenever the owner of Tormenar shall cross it's threshold, he'll never cross it again, except to be carried to his grave.

GILBERT. (C.) But does this nephew exist?

LAZARE. (L.) Of course he does—but he's never been seen or heard of in this neighbourhood; still I once heard his name. Let me see—it's—Don Luis—

(JUANNA, who during the whole of the above scene has been *shrinking* from the gaze which RUTHVEN has fixed on her, and has risen from her seat)

JUANNA. Don Luis!

LAZARE. I've got it! Don Luis de Rigoro.

JUANNA. (*sinking in a chair*) Good heavens!

GILBERT. (*seizing LAZARE'S arm*) Idiot!

LAZARE. Oh, lord! how you frightened me!

GILBERT. Silence—not another word!

LAZARE. What have I done? You would force me to tell all I knew!

GILBERT. (*menacing*) Silence, I say!

LAZARE. Oh, I'm as dumb as an oyster.

JUANNA. Did you not hear, count, Don Luis de Rigoro, and each time the heir to these domains crosses the threshold of this place he dies!

RUTHVEN. Do you not think, count, that it would be better for us to seek out some place where the ladies could pass the night? (*crosses to L. C*)

GILBERT. True, my lord. Now, marquis, will you aid me in searching for some spacious bedroom for the ladies?

MARQUIS. (*having just left a SERVANT who entered, and to whom he had been speaking*) Do not trouble yourself, count, for it seems our servants have found a very desirable suite of rooms. in which they have already lighted fires.

(*during this, RUTHVEN has tried to approach JUANNA, but she seems to shrink from and avoid him*)

GILBERT. Capital—and you, senora?

JUANNA. I will pass the night here, on a chair.

GILBERT. Nay, here it would be impossible, with the draught from yonder broken window. (*going to door, R., with light*) Stay, we have here a charming little sort of a cell, looking out on the balcony—the window seems in good repair, and you will be as comfortable there till daybreak—which will not be long—as if you were in your cell at Huescana.

JUANNA. (*looking in room, R.*) How dark! it looks like a grave! (*shrinks back*)

GILBERT. Shall I watch while you slumber?

JUANNA. No, count, these are childish follies, which I must conquer. I will occupy the room.

RUTHVEN. (*who has advanced towards JUANNA*) Senora!

JUANNA. (*starting and shuddering at the voice*) Heaven!

GILBERT. 'Tis my lord, taking leave of you, senora.

(*Music—JUANNA turns and curtsies, not daring to raise her head—she at last does so, and catching RUTHVEN'S glance, she seems transfixed with an unaccountable dread*)

Where does your lordship intend to pass the night?

RUTHVEN. Think not of me; no doubt I shall find some place or other.

GILBERT. Well, then, so we are settled. That special hour of ghosts and phantoms has passed without any accident, except the arrival of a new and welcome companion. The cut-throats and robbers seem inclined to leave us in tranquil possession of Tormenar, and as for the ghoules and vampires, we seem to be beneath their notice.

RUTHVEN. (C.) Ladies, good night.

GILBERT. (R. C.) And above all, pleasant dreams.

ALL. Good night—good night.

All the TRAVELLERS exit, L. U. E.

GILBERT. (*bringing chair forward*) This, then, must be my couch for the night.

RUTHVEN. Count, and fair senora, farewell till morning.

Exit, L. U. E.

GILBERT. (*to LAZARE*) Why do you not follow your master?

Re-enter RUTHVEN, L. U. E.

RUTHVEN. At his peril!

Exit L. U. E.

LAZARE. He need not be so peremptory about it, for if he'd ordered me to follow, I don't think I should have done it.

GILBERT. Why not?

LAZARE. (L.) Why, because I seem to have got used to this room! at least, there is both a good fire and lights here, and at any rate, it's better than having to grope your way about in the dark corridors. Heaven only knows what one might stumble against.

GILBERT. Pass the night here, if you like—I have no objection. (*Music—to JUANNA*) Well, my dear sister, are we a little less frightened?

JUANNA. It seems there can be no choice in the matter.

GILBERT. I shall be here, quite near, and you will not be even able to utter a sigh without me hearing

JUANNA. My generous protector! Heaven bless you, brother.

GILBERT. (*kissing her forehead*) Pleasant dreams, dear sister, which we doubt not will be realised on your awakening.

JUANNA. I place my faith above. What he decrees must—
(*rallying*) Good night! *Exit door, R. 1 E.*

GILBERT. Poor thing! she struggles hard to keep up her spirits. This continued absence of Don Luis is indeed strange! (*listening at the door*) I think I hear her weeping!

LAZARE. Leave her alone, senor, it will do her good. I only wish I could have a good cry, then I should be all right. (*Music till end of Scene—GILBERT has seated himself at the table and placed two pistols by his side*) Oh, I see, senor, you like to be alone, very well, I'll go into yon cabinet over the way there, so then you'll have a sister on one side, and a devoted servant on the other. (*taking a candle*) I'll go to my chamber over there! (*makes a few steps and stops*) Now, that people could call me coward—absurd! The fact is, I really did not know myself I possessed such valour. Good night! (*advances step by step to the door, L. 2 E, when he gets there he pushes it open and runs away—seeing GILBERT fast asleep*) How sound he sleeps! oh, don't I wish I was already asleep—well, here goes!

After several attempts he plucks up courage and enters the chamber, L. 2 E. A pause—LAZARE is heard to cry out—GILBERT jumps up, seizing a pistol in each hand. Re-enter LAZARE, pale and trembling, with his candle broke in two L. 2 E.

LAZARE. Oh, oh! San-ta Ma-ri-a!

GILBERT. What is it? speak!

LAZARE. Oh, oh, oh! there's something or somebody in that room—

GILBERT. How know you that?

LAZARE. Because I tumbled over it.

GILBERT. (*giving LAZARE a light*) Light the way! (*LAZARE unwilling to light the way—GILBERT looks in*) What do I see? a corpse!

LAZARE. (*nearly falling to the ground and bawling out*) Oh, Santa Maria!

GILBERT. Silence, for your life! show a light!

LAZARE. Not if I know it.

GILBERT. (*taking candle and examining the room*) Quite a youth—a smile still on his countenance, and a wound on the throat! (*entering the room. L. 2 E.*)

LAZARE. Why did I ever come a ghost hunting—it will be my turn next!

Re-enter GILBERT with letter, L. 2 E.

GILBERTS. (*reading letter*) "Dear Don Louis,—We shall meet at Tormenar at eight to part no more; till then, in life or death, think of your own—Juanna." Good heaven! then he must have arrived first! how to let her know this calamity—it will be her death blow!

Music.—A scream is heard in Juanna's room—JUANNA rushes across the stage, wild and haggard—she has a wound in her neck.

JUANNA. (*as she crosses the stage*) Help! Gilbert! help! I die!

(*she enters room, L. 2 E.—GILBERT fires at some one who seems to be pursuing JUANNA—it is RUTHVEN, who falls wounded to the ground—at the noise of firearms*)

All the GENTLEMEN TRAVELLERS enter hastily, L. U. E.

GILBERT. Lord Ruthven! in Juanna's room!

RUTHVEN. (*gasping for breath*) Having heard a struggle in her room, I had hastened to her aid, and was following to defend her, when you fired at me. (*falls*)

GILBERT. And the assassin!

RUTHVEN. Has escaped by the window, no doubt!

MARQUIS. (*who has been into room, L.*) She is dead!

GILBERT. (*L. C., kneeling by RUTHVEN*) Great Heaven! and I have shed his blood who would have saved her. Fly, some one, for aid.

RUTHVEN. (*on ground, C.*) It is too late—I feel it. Count, swear to execute my last request, and I forgive you!

GILBERT. I swear it!

RUTHVEN. (*with a very short breath*) Let no one overhear us!

(*GILBERT motions the TRAVELLERS, who retire*) Count, in the religion I profess, it is the custom that the dead should be laid upon the earth, not buried beneath it. Swear, then, that when I shall have ceased to exist, that you will place me on the mountain, exposed to the beams of the rising moon. Swear this, and you will have done all that mortal aid can do.

GILBERT. But is there no hope?

RUTHVEN. None. Do you swear?

GILBERT. I do, most sincerely.

RUTHVEN. Thanks. Remember, Count Gilbert, the moon beams—your oath!

(*Music—He expires. TRAVELLERS grouped around RUTHVEN—the LADIES have now appeared at the door, L. U. E., and are kept off from entering the room by LAZARE. A mist (gause) envelopes the scene—the whole fades away—when it clears off again, and discovers*

SCENE THIRD.—*The side of a Steep Mountain, looking over a precipice.*

GILBERT discovered bearing the body of RUTHVEN, enveloped in cloak—he places it at the brow of the mountain, gazing round him with horror, and exits down path. The moon is now seen to rise—its beams catches the points of the rocks, and no sooner do they strike the face of the corpse of RUTHVEN, than it is seen to breathe, then it begins to rise, keeping its face to the moon—it at last becomes erect, and shaking back its dark hair, spreads out its two arms, which with the cloak, appears as a pair of wings, and exclaims

RUTHVEN. Thanks, Gilbert, thou hast kept thy word.

END OF ACT FIRST.

Two years are supposed to have elapsed between First and Second Acts.

ACT SECOND.

SCENE FIRST.—*A Terrace in the Gardens of the Castle of Tiffanges.*

GUILLIAME and PEASANTS discovered hanging up garlands.

GUIL. Come, friends, we must lose no time, for ma'amselle will soon be stirring. Everything must be in good order, to welcome home our young master, Count Gilbert, after his absence of two years. But here comes Ma'amselle Helene.

Enter HELENE, R. U. E.—MALE and FEMALE PEASANTS crowd round her.

HELENE. Thanks, my kind friends—not for myself, but for my dear brother, whom I see you have not forgotten, and who, though absent for now some long period, has never neglected to recommend the welfare of his tenantry to my earnest care.

ALL. Long life to Monsieur Gilbert.

HELENE. (C.) Did you, my Guillaume, as I directed, ride over to the villa of Earl Marsden, and acquaint him with the expected return of my brother?

GUIL. Certainly, ma'amselle—but he had already left home, his valet told me that in the middle of the night a messenger on horseback had arrived from Nantes, and forced them to awake his master, and after a conversation of a few minutes with him, his lordship had ordered one of his horses, and had started off where he was ignorant of.

HELENE. Without leaving a note or a message for me?

GUIL. Oh, yes, he begged them to acquaint you of his departure, and to say he should return by mid-day, and the valet was just coming over when I arrived there.

HELENE. Then he will not fail—I know him well. (*distant shouts*) What noise is that? Can it be my brother already? Run, Guillaume, and see.

Enter GILBERT and LAZARE, who is very pale and affrighted, L.—they are surrounded by TENANTS and PEASANTS, shouting.

GILBERT. (*rushing into his sister's arms*) My dear—dear Helene!

HELENE. My dear, long wished for brother!

LAZARE. (*wiping his eyes*) What an affecting moment! especially after the escape we've had.

HELENE. Escape! In heaven's name, dear Gilbert, explain! Have you been in danger?

GILBERT. Calm those fears, my dear, little, affectionate sister, the danger's past, and being a mystery to me, would for ever have been a secret to all, but for my good Lazare here, whose prudence almost equals his courage.

LAZARE. Courage is all very well, but when one's had a very narrow escape of one's life, it's a commodity not always within one's reach.

HELENE. (*to GILBERT, entreatingly*) Do not keep me in this agony of suspense.

GILBERT. Believe me, dear Helene, you as well as Lazare greatly exaggerate the whole matter, although I confess it smacks both of romance and mystery. The facts are, that we had just got to the cross roads, when I perceived a poor beggar woman dressed as one of our old Bretons—I stopped my horse, and held out my hand to her with a few coins, when she suddenly caught hold of my cloak, drew me down towards her, and I believe she really kissed me!

HELENE. (R.) How strange!

GILBERT. But what is stranger still, as she drew me towards her, I heard the explosion of a fire arm, and a bullet whistled past my ear—so had it not been for this good woman I should have been a dead man.

HELENE. Oh, heaven!

LAZARE. (L.) That's exactly what would have been my case if my horse hadn't taken to his heels, for there was no good woman to save *me*!

GILBERT. My first instinct was to turn towards where the shot came from, but my unknown protector, striking my horse, with a branch, exclaimed "Fly for your life!" Off darted my horse over hedge and ditch, like a fury, it was impossible to keep him back—I heard a second shot, but I was out of all danger.

HELENE. And this woman, who had saved you?

GILBERT. I turned round to try to get a glimpse of her, but she had vanished.

LAZARE. And so had I—I never had such a gallop in my life; that I've a morsel of breath left in my body is a phenomenon not to be accounted for; besides— However, I'll not enter into details. (*rubs his back*)

HELENE. We will have this female sought after. I am certain that every one will love and cherish her for having saved the life of one so dear to us all.

GILBERT. My good sister!

HELENE. So Monsieur Lazare is in your service?

GILBERT. Partly so—he has followed me out of pure affection.

LAZARE. And no other earthly motive, believe me, *ma'am-selle*—for I'm well to do in the world.

GILBERT. He inherited from a former master—

LAZARE. Who met with a slight accident, and died from its consequences—a most respectable individual, for he kept his breath in his body especially to tell Monsieur le Comte I was to be sole heir and legatee; for I am convinced, Monsieur Gilbert, what he whispered to you when he fell by that fatal door, was, "I haven't time to make a will, but yonder is my good Lazare, who has faithfully served me during—during—" in fact, I did faithfully serve him, although I was in his service but an hour and a half. "I bequeath to that estimable domestic all I possess; and the only regret is, that I haven't more to leave him." Now wasn't that, *monsieur*, what he told you, when you held him expiring in your arms?

HELENE. Did he then, meet his death by accident or treachery?

GILBERT. (*troubled*) Yes, dear sister, through an unlucky accident. And now Lazare, mention not the subject again.

LAZARE. Of course not, monsieur, but as you said to me on our travels, just six months ago to-day, if within six months no one claims the valise and money of your late master, it is yours. I now therefore, make my claim in due form.

GILBERT. True—true. Take the valise, it is yours—but leave me for a few moments.

LAZARE. Oh, thanks, my dear Monsieur Gilbert. How right I am to be attached to you—I follow you everywhere. I am now rich, but although I can no longer remain your valet, believe me you will ever find me a sincere friend. (*turns to PEASANTS*) And now all of you come along with me, for this shall not only be a holiday in honour of the return of the count your master, but one in commemoration of the new acquaintance you will form with his most sincere and devoted friend.

(*Music—LAZARE takes a GIRL under each arm, and dances off, followed by the PEASANTS, shouting, L. U. E.—GILBERT sits on garden seat*)

HELENE. He seems melancholy. I am now, indeed, glad that he has not seen George before learning the whole truth from my lips.

GILBERT. Come, my good little sister, and sit here by my side. (*places an amulet round her neck, which he takes from his own*) There, dear sister, I return you this sacred relic of our forefathers, which henceforth must never quit you; and now let us speak of bygone days—tell me if you still love me as dearly as ever.

HELENE. As an only sister can love!

GILBERT. (*abstractedly*) Poor Juanna, she was a second sister to me during a whole evening.

HELENE. What did you say, Gilbert?

GILBERT. Nothing—nothing, dear Helene! So, then, at last you have consented to reward our good Philippe for the love and devotion he has shown us both since infancy.

HELENE. Dear Gilbert, I have at last been taught the difference between affection and friendship.

GILBERT. But Philippe!

HELENE. Like the true and loyal heart you had ever known him, has quitted Brittany till he can look on me, dear Gilbert, as a sincere and attached friend. Nay, do not frown; for months have I vainly endeavoured to shake off the influence that another has gained over me.

GILBERT. But dear Helene, is this affection of yours reciprocated?

HELENE. Indeed it is! and by one who is fully worthy of my affection, and for whom, dear brother, you will have no cause to blush.

GILBERT. But his name!

HELENE. The Earl of Marsden, an English nobleman.

GILBERT. Is he handsome?

HELENE. Of course it is but natural that I should think him so, but you will be able to judge for yourself, for he will be here at midday.

GILBERT. Well, since my own dear Helene has given him all her heart, I suppose I must manage to spare him part of mine; but see, here are all the villagers in their holiday clothes.

Enter GUILLAUME and PEASANTS, L. U. E.

GUIL. Pardon, Monsieur and Ma'amselle, the lads and girls of the village have got up a little fête in honour of Monsieur Gilbert's return, if you will do them the honour to witness it.

GILBERT. Certainly; let them proceed at once!

(Music.—GILBERT and HELENE seat themselves—Rustic Ballet—at the end of the ballet, clock strikes twelve.)

Enter SERVANT, R. U. E.

SERVANT. *(announcing)* The Earl of Marsden!

HELENE. At last! You will receive him kindly, Gilbert, will you not, for my sake?

GILBERT. Fear not, dear sister!

Enter RUTHVEN, R. U. E.—he goes to HELENE—he is hid from GILBERT by the PEASANTS, who curtsy to him, but when they clear the way, GILBERT starts at seeing him.

GILBERT. Good Heavens! *(chord)* It is he!

RUTHVEN. Good morning, count!

HELENE. *(rushing to her brother)* Gilbert!

GILBERT. You the Earl of Marsden!

RUTHVEN. And your most humble servant.

HELENE. Gilbert! George! what does this mean?

RUTHVEN. Doubtless the recollection of an incident that once happened to us.

HELENE. You, then, know my brother!

RUTHVEN. I do!

HELENE. You are acquainted with the Earl of Marsden?

GILBERT. Dear Helene, leave us for a few moments, I would exchange a few words with this gentleman!

HELENE. Do not forget what you promised me!

GILBERT. (*pressing her hand*) Never fear!

HELENE and all the PEASANTS retire up stage.
(to RUTHVEN) I am sure you will easily excuse the strange reception I have just given you, my lord.

RUTHVEN. (R.) Readily, count, for I am convinced I am the last of your acquaintance you ever expected to have met here.

GILBERT. (L.) Living!

RUTHVEN. Real flesh and blood—do you regret it?

GILBERT. I who saw you lay weltering in your blood, who laid you a corpse on the cold earth! impossible!

RUTHVEN. Why so, my dear count? This is not the first time a deep wound has not proved mortal. Have you never heard of a death-like trance? I was deeply wounded, and in a trance which to all appeared as if life were extinct, the morning breeze revived me, and on my recovering my senses, I found myself alone. I cried for help! luckily I was heard by a mountain guide, who carried me to his cottage; and, thanks to the assiduous care of his wife and daughter, I was restored to life. No sooner could I move out, but I tried to find and acquaint you with my miraculous escape, but as it was impossible to get any tidings of you, I determined to start at once for Brittany, feeling sure that sooner or later you would return to your native home. It was a debt of gratitude I was bound to fulfil, for had it not been for you, I might have been buried and suffocated while in my trance. Fate ordained that I should meet your lovely sister. I loved her and was happy enough to create a sympathetic feeling between us, and to-day I am most happy once again to meet and ask you for that hand which her heart has already freely granted me.

GILBERT. But at Tormenar you called yourself Lord Ruthven—how is it I find you here, under another name.

RUTHVEN. Since our last meeting, count, my elder brother has died! I have therefore inherited both his title and estates.

GILBERT. Pray excuse me, my lord, for my questions, which must doubtless weary your patience.

RUTHVEN. Proceed, count—satisfy yourself.

GILBERT. Why, then, did you hide from Helene that we were acquainted?

RUTHVEN. Why, our acquaintance was but of short duration; besides, count, you accidentally assailed my life! Not knowing if you wished your sister to be made aware of this, I thought it was best to be silent until your return.

GILBERT. (*looking at him*) It is truly wonderful!

HELENE. (*coming down, L.*) Well, brother, is all understood?

RUTHVEN. Everything, dear Helene! the count could not

believe his eyes at first, when he saw me again whom he little expected to meet, but he is now fully convinced, and consents to our union.

HELENE. (*putting her arm round GILBERT's neck*) Thanks, dear brother, but you are pale. Will you retire to your chamber?

GILBERT. Yes, Helene, for I feel a cold shudder all over me.
(*seats himself, gazing at RUTHVEN.*)

HELENE. (*to SERVANT*) Are my brother's apartments in readiness?

SERVANT. Yes, ma'amselle!

RUTHVEN. (*in R. corner, aside*) This time he shall not escape me!

Enter the UNKNOWN as a PEASANT from the CROWD.

UNKNOWN. (*down, L.—as she passes GILBERT*) Remember the fate of Juanna!

GILBERT. The woman who saved my life. (*starting up*)

UNKNOWN. (*putting her finger to her lips*) Not a word!
(*disappears among CROWD.*)

RUTHVEN. (*R., having remarked the UNKNOWN*) That woman again!

HELENE. (*taking GILBERT's arm*) Come, Gilbert! Farewell, dear George, but for a few moments!

GILBERT. (*transfixed with horror*) The fate of Juanna! those words to issue from the very lips of the being who saved my life. Is she, then, a guardian angel sent by Providence, to counteract the dealing of the evil spirit. (*gazing at RUTHVEN—to himself*) Yes, and there he stands—the finger of Heaven devotes him to me. I must see this mysterious agent again—this incertitude will drive me mad!

HELENE. Dear Gilbert!

(*GILBERT waking up from his reverie, and clasping HELENE in his arms*)

GILBERT. My dear sister! Come—come, do not leave me!
Music—Hurries HELENE off, R. U. E., followed by PEASANTRY—RUTHVEN looking after them

RUTHVEN. Does he suspect? Ay, he does! I must be convinced who that woman is, and what she said to him—she shall not cross his path again. (*retires*)

Enter LAZARE, L. U. E., with a valise and bag of gold.

LAZARE. Well, I never passed a more pleasant day in all my life! What unknown delight it is to count over one's riches. I feel myself a person of importance—and of course I am an indi-

vidual of great importance—that is, if wealth can give importance. Let me see—(*looks over paper*) I possess 4,000 francs in gold, £300 in English bank notes, and about 5,000 francs worth of jewelry. I can now thoroughly afford to set up a large establishment and a small wife. What a kind master my defunct was. I'd give something handsome were I convinced he was fully aware of the respect I have for his memory.

RUTHVEN. (*coming down L. of LAZARE*) Lazare!

LAZARE. (*amazed, trembling*) Eh, eh!

RUTHVEN. I see that like a good and faithful servant, you have taken care of your master's property. I shall, for the future hold you up as a model to all confidential valets. You can convey the valise you have in your hand, there, to my apartment.

LAZARE. (*trembling—to himself*) Santa Maria!

RUTHVEN. (*taking the bag out of LAZARE's hand*) My purse, too, untouched! Really, my good Lazare, such integrity deserves the highest reward, therefore, retain the purse. (*returns it*) as a mark of my appreciation of your conduct. Do you hear? (*LAZARE stares at him without being able to articulate*) You can leave me now, my good and trustworthy attendant.

LAZARE. Saint Dominic help me!

Staggers off nearly dead with fright, R.

RUTHVEN. I shall have to silence that idiot's tongue—but that will be an easy task—and now to seek out this unknown protector of Gilbert, if she be mortal she shall not escape my revenge!

Enter HELENE, R. U. E.

Ah, my dearest betrothed! thanks for this speedy return to the arms of your devoted slave! (*presses HELENE in his arms*) I see the arrival of your brother will not, as I had feared, engross all your affection.

HELENE. Oh, George! Some supernatural power, the same you ever seem to have over me, seems to drag me back to this spot—this spot where we first met, and where we first exchanged our vows of love and constancy.

RUTHVEN. Dear Helene, my heart sinks within me when I think I may lose that happiness so nearly within my grasp. Did the cold reception I received from your brother pass unobserved by you?

HELENE. Nay, fear him not; Gilbert has always left me free mistress of my heart and hand. Perhaps at first he might have been a little disappointed—you know he had set his heart on my marrying Philippe—but I thought you perfectly understood each other?

RUTHVEN. True—he shook my hand cordially, and all seemed amicably arranged—when suddenly his manner altered to one of freezing coldness. A single word, whispered by some one to him, had sufficed to create this change!

HELENE. But who could have spoken to him?

RUTHVEN. Did you not observe an old beggar woman, who whispered to him?

HELENE. Doubtless the very person who this very morning saved his life!

RUTHVEN. Saved his life?

HELENE. I forget—you are not aware that Gilbert was fired at on his road hither; and had it not been for an old beggar woman, who catching hold of his cloak, drew him towards her, he would have been killed. Why do you smile?

RUTHVEN. Then you really believe in this attempted murder?

HELENE. Why not?

RUTHVEN. Why? But no, let us drop the subject altogether!

HELENE. Do you think that Gilbert imagined it all?

RUTHVEN. My dear Helene, have you well remarked the conduct of your brother since his return?

HELENE. Certainly—why do you ask?

RUTHVEN. I thought you might have remarked his strange manner—as for myself, save this wild story of attempted murder, I think him much better—in fact, entirely cured.

HELENE. Cured! Pray explain yourself.

RUTHVEN. I sincerely regret, my dear Helene, to be first to announce such unwelcome news, but sooner or later you must have heard it. Know, then, that your brother has for months been bereft of his senses.

HELENE. Mad! Gilbert mad!

RUTHVEN. Be not alarmed—he is now perfectly cured, and the best proof is, that you, his own sister, did not remark it.

HELENE. But to what cause did you attribute it?

RUTHVEN. To a terrible accident. Gilbert labours under a delusion that he has killed one of his friends.

HELENE. For heaven's sake tell me how.

RUTHVEN. The facts are these—about six months ago, we happened to meet at an old deserted castle in Spain, where several benighted travellers had sought refuge from the inclemency of the weather; suddenly we were all awoken by the screams of a young Spanish senora, named Juanna—I instantly rushed to her aid, but through some unaccountable accident, received, full in my chest, the contents of a pistol, fired by your brother. I instantly fainted, and I believe, was carried

away. Ever since that fatal moment, a fixed idea has taken possession of Gilbert of having caused the death of a fellow being, and no sooner the shades of night come on, than strange fancies of phantoms, spectres, and supernatural beings occupy his mind.

HELENE. Oh, my poor brother!

RUTHVEN. You can now fully comprehend in what an awkward position I stand with him, and how right my apprehensions are that he may oppose our union.

HELENE. George, you know how dearly and faithfully I am devoted to you—I have promised to be yours, and yours only, and my word is sacred—let there be no delay—fix the hour at once! Does not that suffice?

RUTHVEN. Thanks, my dear Helene! I will instantly seek the priest, and give orders to prepare the chapel. Farewell, dearest, till we again meet to part no more. (*aside*) Let him come now—I fear him not—whatever he may say she will not believe him; yet I will leave her but for a moment.

Music—Exit, L. U. E.

HELENE. What have I just heard? My dear Gilbert stricken with such a calamity! I now remember his manner on seeing George was most strange—besides, he appeared pale and careworn. Henceforth, it shall be the task of myself and husband to alleviate his sufferings, and restore him to reason. (*Music*)

GILBERT. (*without, R. U. E.*) Helene—my sister! Helene!

GILBERT *rushes on, R. U. E., and clasps HELENE in his arms—he is very pale.*

Safe! thank Heaven!

HELENE. (L.) Dear Gilbert, what is the meaning of these words?

GILBERT. Where is this Ruthven—this Earl of Marsden?

HELENE. He has this instant left me.

GILBERT. The wretch!

HELENE. Gilbert!

GILBERT. Where is he now?

HELENE. Doubtless in the chapel with the priest.

GILBERT. In the chapel! He would never dare darken the door of its holy precincts.

HELENE. You forget this is our marriage day!

GILBERT. Marriage! My dear sister, you, an angel, unite yourself to this accursed demon!

HELENE. For Heaven's sake speak not thus—consider, he is my husband.

GILBERT. Your husband! Rather would I see you in your grave—I must and will see him!

Enter RUTHVEN, L. U. E.

RUTHVEN. (L.) I am here, count, what would you with me?

GILBERT. At last! Leave us, Helene!

HELENE. (*imploringly*) Oh, Gilbert, I entreat of you!

RUTHVEN. Stay, ma'amselle, I beg; I have nothing to conceal from my affianced wife, count!

GILBERT. (*turning HELENE round to R.*) Your wife! Never, while I live!

HELENE. (R.) Dear brother, pray calm yourself!

GILBERT. (C.) Yes, when that creature shall have left these walls, never to return.

HELENE. Why, Gilbert?

GILBERT. He knows too well. You see he dare not ask.

RUTHVEN. (L.) You are wrong, count, for I was just about to request you to explain your meaning.

GILBERT. You wish it—be it so. Remain, Helene, and hear for whom you have slighted the noble heart of the companion of your childhood, and to whom you have plighted your virgin faith.

HELENE. What will he say?

GILBERT. Murderer of Juanna! whose blood seek you here?

RUTHVEN. Murderer! Really, count, if either of us deserves that title, 'tis rather yourself than I. Who of us two was it, that fell nearly expiring to the ground, struck by the murderous arm of the other?

GILBERT. Ay, answer that! I own that a bullet of mine pierced your heart, and that I laid you a lifeless corpse on the cold earth; answer—how is it then, that I find you here, standing alive before me?

HELENE. Good heavens!

RUTHVEN. I believe I explained that fully.

GILBERT. Yes, but what you did not explain was, why my life was attempted, and who was the being that sought it.

RUTHVEN. Count, this sounds very like an accusation.

GILBERT. It does—you know 'twas yourself.

RUTHVEN. Me! Why should I seek your life?

HELENE. Ay, Gilbert, why?

GILBERT. Why, to sever from an innocent girl her only protector and adviser, that you might make her an easier prey, as one of your yearly victims. Shall I explain my meaning more fully?

HELENE. But, dear brother, what can induce you to make such an accusation?

GILBERT. A vision sent from Heaven.

HELENE. By Heaven!

GILBERT. (*turning HELENE to c.*) Ay, my dear Helene. But now, I sought my couch for a few moments repose, when before me stood the poor gipsy who saved me from his deadly aim—and as in a vision, a mist seemed to roll down before my eyes, and there I beheld you, my dear sister, in the vampire's clutch.

HELENE. (*involuntarily shrinks from RUTHVEN*) Gilbert, in Heaven's name speak not thus!

RUTHVEN. (*aside*) He knows all.

GILBERT. You are silent, Lord Ruthven!

RUTHVEN. What can I say, count? (*going to HELENE*) Now, dear Helene, are you convinced?

GILBERT. (L.) What, sister, do you still cling to that fiend? Be warned, for rather than see you his, I would strike you dead at my feet.

HELENE. Dear brother, calm yourself.

GILBERT. Coward! defend yourself, or this hand shall strike you down.

HELENE. Help—help! Guillaume. (*Music*) Heaven have mercy on him! My poor brother is mad.

GILBERT. I mad!

Enter GUILLAUME and SERVANTS, R. U. E.

GUILLAUME. Monsieur Gilbert mad!

RUTHVEN. Yes, friends, that is what we sought to hide from you all, but the count himself has forced us to divulge the truth!

GILBERT. Mad or not, I will rid the earth of such a fiend! (*Music—Rushes on RUTHVEN, the SERVANTS stop him, and seize his arms*)

RUTHVEN. My good friends, for your mistress's sake treat him gently, but do not lose sight of him for an instant, or he might attempt his life.

GILBERT. (*struggling*) Villain—villain!

HELENE. Dear Gilbert, for Heaven's sake remain not here!

(*GILBERT is dragged off, struggling with SERVANTS, R. U. E.—GUILLAUME and all follow.*)

RUTHVEN. Follow him, my dear bride—a sister's care may be more beneficial than any surgical aid. Besides, 'twere as well, while such thoughts run through his brain, that he be in close confinement, and that no stranger may have converse

with him. Go, dearest, and when he becomes again his former self, tell him I will forgive him freely.

HELENE. Heaven bless you for it, dear George. *Exit, R. U. E.*

RUTHVEN. Now to hasten the nuptials! Fate itself shall not wrest her from my arms; and as for the demon who has denounced me to Gilbert, I have recognised her in spite of her disguise. By the master we both serve—wherever thou art, appear—appear!

The UNKNOWN rises behind the terrace as if in the air—she is dressed as Scene 2, Act 1.

UNKNOWN. I am here—what would you?

RUTHVEN. You have forfeited your existence—you have betrayed me.

UNKNOWN. I have not.

RUTHVEN. 'Tis false. In the disguise of an old Breton—you saved Gilbert's life by the cross road.

UNKNOWN. Well, is not this my right?

RUTHVEN. Why have you acted thus?

UNKNOWN. Because I love him.

RUTHVEN. Love him! Can such as we love?

UNKNOWN. I love him.

RUTHVEN. And you expect to have your affection returned?

UNKNOWN. I hope so.

RUTHVEN. Then you know not that he is betrothed?

UNKNOWN. I care not; when time requires it, I shall know how to act; in the meanwhile, I watch over Gilbert's happiness; his sister's death would break his heart—Gilbert must live!

RUTHVEN. I will reveal to him who and what you are.

UNKNOWN. And that moment be exterminated for ever.

RUTHVEN. Do you then brave me?

UNKNOWN. No, I seek but to win Gilbert's heart by saving one who is dear to him from thy deathly embrace!

RUTHVEN. You know not what I am, when I hate!

UNKNOWN. Nor do you what I can be, when I love! Therefore, beware! *Music—Tableau and*

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

A C T T H I R D .

SCENE FIRST.—*The Boudoir of Helene. Table with candelabras lighted—a window, with balcony beyond, R.—a merry peal of bells, and distant shouts.*

Music.—FOUR BRIDESMAIDS and PEASANTS discovered—they bow and retire, c.

Enter RUTHVEN and HELENE, in a bridal dress, c.

RUTHVEN. How beautiful she looks! I would spare her! But no, to encourage such a feeling might lead to my own ruin. (*taking her in his arms*) At last, dear wife we are alone!

HELENE. I have faithfully kept my promised word, George, have I not?

RUTHVEN. You have, indeed, dear Helene. I am the happiest of men.

HELENE. Are you quite sure of that? .

RUTHVEN. Do you doubt me?

HELENE. No, indeed, George, no woman can more fondly love than I do. Yet if a cloud now and then does overshadow my happiness, you must forgive me. I cannot forget that beneath this roof there is another being as wretched as we are happy.

RUTHVEN. Poor Gilbert!

HELENE. Whom we have been obliged to confine, lest he should attempt your life. I should not like to retire for the night without seeing my poor brother again—let me go to him, dear George, to calm and soothe him by telling him how happy I am.

RUTHVEN. Your wishes are my commands, dear Helene—you are sovereign mistress here, yet—

HELENE. Speak, George, speak.

RUTHVEN. I think it would be better for me to go to your brother, and try a last effort to reconcile him to our union—if it should fail, I will tell him, in order to bring tranquility for a short time to his fevered brain, that I resign all pretensions to you, and will depart.

HELENE. But should you not succeed in restoring him to tranquility.

RUTHVEN. You shall then go yourself.

HELENE. Be it so.

RUTHVEN. You do love me?

HELENE. Where I gave my hand, I gave my heart.

RUTHVEN. Thanks. I shall not be long.

Takes candelabra, and exit, c.

HELENE. Who could have been that old woman on whom I bestowed charity as we left the chapel, who whispered to me these words—"Try and be alone for a few minutes, for there is some one who would reveal a matter of great import to you." Heaven is my witness that I do not doubt my husband, yet I cannot entirely chase Gilbert's words from my mind. Oh, my dear mother, look down from above, and guide your child how to act. (*goes to R. table*)

LAZARE *appears at the door—he puts his finger to his lips, c.*

LAZARE! what means this mystery?

LAZARE. (*signing to her to blow out candles*) Puff, puff!

HELENE. Extinguish the candles!

LAZARE. Yes.

HELENE. Wherefore?

LAZARE. Because I've discovered there is such a thing as g conscience.

HELENE. Conscience! have you, then, any avowal to make to me?

LAZARE. Rather.

HELENE. Approach, then.

LAZARE. (*pointing to candles*) Yes, when you've—puff, puff!

HELENE. There. (*blowing out light*) Good Heaven! What can it all mean?

LAZARE. Ever since this morning I've been a dead man—I've been hid up in a garret, lest he should insist on taking me into his service again. But when I, by chance, heard by one of the servants who was kindly trying to comfort me, that poor Monsieur Gilbert was confined as mad, and that you, my dear young lady were to be united to the individual, although I'm a great coward, I plucked up courage, which I am sure my patron saint herself inspired me with—and left my hiding place. I determined to watch for the moment when you would be alone—

HELENE. Well!

LAZARE. And as I saw my lord go down to your brother, so I popped up.

HELENE. For what reason?

LAZARE. To tell you your brother is no more mad than I am. In fact not so much.

HELENE. What mean you?

LAZARE. I could not swear that my lord murdered Senora Juanna, because I didn't see him do it—but that he was as dead as a door nail, and come back to life again by some unaccountable patent, that I *can* swear to.

HELENE. Dead !

LAZARE. And no mistake—for I helped to carry his corpse out of the Castle of Tormenar, and what he whispered to Monsieur Gilbert just before giving up the ghost, I distinctly heard, although I've never said so before—it was "Count, I belong to a sect who never bury the dead."

HELENE. Great Heaven !

LAZARE. "Promise, that as soon I shall be quite gone, place me on a rock, in the beams of the rising moon." And that's exactly what we foolishly did, instead of burying him fifty feet underground, and piling all the ruins of Tormenar on the top of him.

HELENE. Then you believe, like Gilbert, that he was really dead ?

LAZARE. Most emphatically.

HELENE. And that he was resuscitated through some supernatural power ?

LAZARE. Exactly.

HELENE. And the man who yesterday attempted Gilbert's life—

LAZARE. I'm confident was he ; and I've no doubt I shall be the next one he'll want to put out of the way, in spite of all his gammon about my integrity. The purse he gave me—(*takes purse from pocket*) here it is. I'm very fond of lucre, but its very touch is fire. (*throws purse on ground*)

HELENE. Then Gilbert was right—I am lost. Let us fly ! (*they rush to the door*) Silence !

LAZARE. He's coming back.

HELENE. Heaven protect me !

LAZARE. No chance of the door—I'll try the window. (*looks out at window*) Fifty feet at least, that's no go.

Music—Hides on balcony, R.

Enter RUTHVEN, with candelabra, C.

RUTHVEN. You see I have soon returned, dear Helene. Your brother was asleep, and I would not disturb him. (*looking at her*) How pale you are !

HELENE. (*looking fixedly at him*) Yet not so pale as you, my lord.

RUTHVEN. Dearest, I never had much colour, through the quantity of blood I lost by the wound I received from your brother.

HELENE. But your pallor, George, appears more like that of a corpse than a human being.

RUTHVEN. What mean you, Helene?

HELENE. I can hardly say, but for the first time you seem to inspire me with a secret dread.

RUTHVEN. Why do you tremble—give me your hand.

HELENE. Yours has the icy grasp of death!

RUTHVEN. Speak not thus, my dear wife! Let this fond embrace reassure you.

HELENE. Touch me not, for Heaven's sake! It seems to me as if the grasp of death was on me.

RUTHVEN. Helene, who has been here during my absence?

HELENE. No one—no one!

RUTHVEN. (*looking around*) Who could it have been? (*kicks against purse which he picks up*) The purse I gave Lazare! The wretch! he has been here and revealed all!

HELENE. (*shrinking from him*) It is, then, true.

RUTHVEN. Not a moment then is to be lost?

(*Music—closes the c. door.*)

HELENE. Why do you close the door? (*trembling*)

RUTHVEN. Are we not united for ever—are you not my bride?

HELENE. For Heaven's sake, my lord—(*he takes her hand*) Oh, my brother, Gilbert.

LAZARE. (*on the balcony*) Help—help!

RUTHVEN. We were not alone, then?

HELENE. Save me—save me! Help—help!

RUTHVEN. Your cries are useless—you are Ruthven's bride.
(*takes her up in his arms.*)

HELENE. Help—help!

RUTHVEN. 'Tis too late—none can tear you from my grasp.
Music—Rushes off through door with her, L.

LAZARE rushes from balcony, and goes to the door, c., which he finds locked—He calls, "Help—help!"

GILBERT. (*without, shaking the door*) I am here to save you—open the door!

LAZARE opens the door—GILBERT rushes on, c.—he is without his coat.

GILBERT. He had me bound, but I burst my bonds—I darted past the four men who tried to hold me back. My unknown friend, the gipsy, again warned me of my sister's danger. Where is Helene?

LAZARE. (*pointing to door, L.*) There, with—oh !
(*shuddering—a piercing scream is heard—Music.*)

GILBERT. (*with a wild cry*) Heaven have mercy on her.

He rushes to the door, L., and meets RUTHVEN coming from it—RUTHVEN starts on seeing GILBERT, who seizes him by the throat—a mortal struggle ensues, in which they approach the window—Music.

RUTHVEN. (*struggling*) Both of us will perish, so be it then.

(*they struggle again*—RUTHVEN is about to throw GILBERT out of the window—GILBERT regains his feet, and precipitates RUTHVEN out of the window—he then rushes to the door, L.)

GILBERT. Oh, Helene, my dear sister! *Goes off L. door.*
(LAZARE seizes pieces of furniture, which he throws out of the window, one after the other)

LAZARE. This time I'll do for him, and no mistake.

(closed in by

SCENE SECOND.—*A Corridor in the Castle.*—(1st Grooves.)

Enter GUILLAUME, TENANTRY, and SERVANTS, R.—they all seem alarmed.

GUIL. What can be the meaning of the noise, and that piercing scream which came from the bridal chamber, ringing through the whole castle!

A SERVANT and THREE OTHERS enter, *hastily*, L.

SERVANT. Monsieur Gilbert has escaped from his keepers, and burst his chains.

Enter GILBERT, haggard, R.

GILBERT. Dead! I was too late! (*the SERVANTS advance ards him*) *to* Touch me not, on your life. Run, Guillaume, to your mistress's chamber, and you will see a sorry sight. (*to SERVANT*) Get a torch instantly. *Rushes out, L.*

GUIL. What can have happened?

Enter LAZARE, R.—he is pale, and his hair standing erect.

GUIL. Lazare ! what does all this mean ?

LAZARE. (*hardly knowing what he says*) Murder! robbery! resuscitation! extermination!

Rushes off after GILBERT, L.

GUIL. Follow me, my friends, to Ma'amselle Helene's apartment. Heaven grant that my fears may prove unfounded !

(*Music—They follow GUILLAUME off, R.—the scene changes to*

SCENE THIRD.—*A Precipice by the Side of the Castle of Tiffanges. On the R. the high turret.*

The mangled corpse of RUTHVEN at the foot of turret, with all the pieces of furniture round it. Midnight strikes—the moon is seen rising.

GILBERT, with a torch in his hand, is seen coming down the rocks out of the flies, followed by LAZARE, seeking for the body of RUTHVEN—after some difficulty they find it.

GILBERT. I could but avenge you, Helene !

(LAZARE, pushing a large piece of rock, which seems to fall over the body of RUTHVEN, and crush it)

LAZARE. This time I will inherit, and no mistake !

Tableau and

END OF ACT THIRD.

ACT FOURTH.

SCENE FIRST.—*A Boudoir, Looking on to a Terrace, with a View of the Bay of Naples. Prie Dieu, L. U. E.*

ANTONIA is seen seated on the terrace, R., looking towards the sea, C.—LAZARE, looking through a telescope, L.—ZISKA (the UNKNOWN) dressed as an Arab slave, standing behind, and gazing steadfastly at ANTONIA.

LAZARE. There, ma'amselle, the passengers are landing from the vessel we first saw but as a speck on the horizon this morning, and the other is standing for the harbour. I'd lay something handsome that Monsieur Gilbert is in one of them.

ANTONIA. (*rising*) His letter said he would arrive to-day.

ZISKA. (*up stage*) Then, doubtless, he will not fail to keep his word.

LAZARE. You're right there, Ziska, for if you knew Count Gilbert, you'd know he never fails when he has given

his word, and sometimes to his cost too, for if he had once broken his word with a certain individual in Spain, months ago, he would have been now a far happier man!

ANTONIA. (*coming forward*) Ever faithful, my good Lazare. I shall not forget to mention to Gilbert on his arrival, how I am indebted to you for the comfortable abode I found ready for me here!

LAZARE. Lor, ma'amselle, I had very little to do with it. If any thanks are due it is to Ziska yonder, who merits them all.

ANTONIA. (*to ZISKA*) How can I ever sufficiently reward you for your tried attachment to me?

ZISKA. I seek not for thanks—I have but followed the dictates of my heart. *Slightly inclines her head, and exit, L.*

ANTONIA. What a strange being!

LAZARE. And what eyes! there's no mistake about them! I'm sure I've seen those eyes somewhere before!

ANTONIA. But how did you first meet her?

LAZARE. Why, you see, ma'amselle, Monsieur Gilbert said to me, "Lazare, my friend," for since I have inherited, we are on terms of great intimacy. "Lazare, my friend, start instantly for Naples, and prepare a suitable abode to receive my dear affianced bride, according, therefore, for Naples I started, and on arriving here I saw this little villa, situated on a rock, overlooking the bay, which I thought was just the thing, and, therefore I settled on it at once—this done, Ziska suddenly appeared, and informed me she had served the former tenants; liking her appearance, and thinking she'd form a very good companion for me to have a sentimental walk with by the sea-side in a summer evening, I instantly engaged her, and she has turned out a first rate acquisition.

ANTONIA. Indeed she has—she anticipates my slightest wishes. But why did Gilbert entreat me to leave France, and come here?

LAZARE. Doubtless he has some private reason.

ANTONIA. I can fully understand, that after the sudden death of his dearly beloved sister, France should have become hateful to him—but why not let me return to Spain, my native country, instead of coming to Italy, where I have neither friends nor relations.

LAZARE. Why? why, because it's in Spain where we first met him.

ANTONIA. Well, then, England?

LAZARE. No, that's where *he* comes from.

ANTONIA. Of whom are you speaking, Lazare?

LAZARE. Why, of Monsieur Gilbert's mortal enemy.

ANTONIA. Has Gilbert an enemy?

LAZARE. And such an one too! And so should I have, if he came back again—for I've spent nearly half my inheritance.

ANTONIA. What do you mean by—If he came back again?

LAZARE. Why, he's already been back once, although my lord Gilbert killed him quite as well the first time as he did the second.

ANTONIO. Gilbert take the life of a fellow being!

LAZARE. But he wasn't a fellow being, so that makes all the difference. But I was wrong to mention the matter to you at all, so please ma'amselle, never let out the name of Ruthven to Monsieur Gilbert, if you don't hear it first from him.

ANTONIA. Ruthven!

LAZARE. That's how he was called. (*shuddering*) Oh, oh! the very thought of him gives me a cold shudder—but I'll leave you now, ma'amselle, and go and see after a little business of my own. I don't mind letting you into the secret—it's a slight love affair, a young female for whom I have a great predilection, and as Count Gilbert is about to enter the state of holy connubiality, I've a great mind to follow his example. Men were sent on earth to fulfil a mission, and I think it's high time that I should set about mine, and take a wife to help me in it.

ANTONIA. I hope she you choose may prove worthy of you.

LAZARE. Thank you, ma'amselle—I've no doubt she will, for I intend to well look before I leap. Besides, I flatter myself of being a fair physiognomist, and a perfect judge of the opposite sex. Well, I sincerely hope to see Count Gilbert back soon, and with an object, the loss of which seems to prey so heavily upon his mind.

ANTONIA. What object do you allude to?

LAZARE. Why, a certain amulet that had been in the family for years, which poor Ma'amselle Helene had on the night of his death, and which disappeared in a most mysterious way, and was never since heard of, although Monsieur Gilbert has offered fabulous sums for its recovery. But time fleets on, and my dear little Fenella will be waiting for me. (*crossing to R.*) Cupid calls, and as a weak mortal, I obey. *Exit, R.*

ANTONIA. (*taking out a letter, and reading it*) "Dear Antonia—if you bear the love for me I think you do, I entreat you leave France—do not return to your father at Cadiz, but start instantly for Naples, where you will find Lazare, and everything prepared for your reception. An omen of ill has again crossed my wretched path of life—should you not yield to my entreaties, you yourself might fall a victim to him who seems to crush all around that are dear to me. On the 15th of

March I shall again press you to my heart." This is the 15th of March—my heart tells me he will not fail. (*Music*) Heaven grant that he may have already landed, for yonder dark clouds announce a coming tempest.

(*Music—She goes and kneels at the Prie Dieu—suddenly the door opens, and*

GILBERT *rushes on, R.*

GILBERT. Dear Antonia!

ANTONIA. (*rushes into his arms*) Heaven did not hear my prayers in vain!

GILBERT. Thanks, my dear affianced bride, for yielding to my entreaties.

ANTONIA. Did you for a moment doubt I should? But why all these measures?

GILBERT. After the death of my dear Helene, you know I left France, and passed nine months with you at Cadiz; having gained your parents' consent to our union, I returned to Brittany, to prepare the home of my ancestors for the reception of my future bride; having arrived there, I determined to pass a night in the chamber where I had been once warned of danger threatening those dear to me. Heaven must have given me inspiration, for again a vision appeared, warning me that the fiend followed my steps, and but sought the opportunity of discovering the idol of my heart to destroy it. I then instantly wrote, begging you not to come to Tiffanges, but instantly proceed to Naples, and now I have you in these arms, I will lose not a moment in calling you mine, and this very night all is prepared for me to lead you to the altar.

ANTONIA. To be united to part no more. (*distant thunder—goes up to C. window*) See what a storm is rising—look at yonder vessel striving to gain the harbour.

GILBERT. (*R., down stage*) The very one that left France when we set set sail, and has performed the voyage with us.

ANTONIA. I thank Heaven that you are out of the reach of all danger.

Enter ZISKA, L.

Ah, Ziska, my faithful friend! I know you will be rejoiced to hear my approaching happiness.

GILBERT. Who is that female? (*recognizing the UNKNOWN*) Heaven!

ANTONIA. A faithful attendant, who has zealously served me since my arrival here.

GILBERT. (R.) I surely know those features!

ANTONIA. Doubtless such a traveller as you have been may have met her before. However, I'll leave you for a short time, so you may converse together about the scenery of her native Africa.

GILBERT. Why leave me, dear Antonia?

ANTONIA. The bride of Gilbert requires another dress than this for her wedding garb. I shall not keep you long waiting; a plain wreath is all I require—for the brightest gem I bring Gilbert is the purity of the love I bear him.

Music—She crosses to L. D., and exit.

GILBERT. (to ZISKA) You are pale—you tremble!

ZISKA. (C.) I do.

GILBERT. Why cast that menacing look at Antonia—it did not escape me?

ZISKA. I hate her.

GILBERT. We have met before, have we not?—but where?

ZISKA. Ingrate.

GILBERT. I now remember—you bear the features of the old Breton that saved my life, and who warned me of the fate of my poor sister.

ZISKA. I am glad to see you do not forget me!

GILBERT. What being are you who can thus change form and visage at your pleasure?

ZISKA. Would that I could change my heart too!

GILBERT. Why thus follow my steps?

ZISKA. Can you not guess?

GILBERT. No.

ZISKA. I love you, Gilbert.

GILBERT. (R.) Love me!

ZISKA. Has your heart no answer to me for those words?

GILBERT. None—your manner makes me tremble.

ZISKA. "And that is your only reply to me who has watched over you like a guardian spirit, and done all that a loving heart could do!

GILBERT. Yet you did not save my sister.

ZISKA. I dared not—I would have saved her had it been in my power. Look at me, Gilbert, and read from the depths of your heart if you could not love me!

GILBERT. How can you ask, when you know I am betrothed to Antonia?

ZISKA. Gilbert, I am immortal, but for your love would willingly sacrifice all—cast me not from you.

GILBERT. (crosses to L. corner) Woman, I cannot love you

seek some other heart that is free, and do not attempt to cast a cloud over my happiness.

ZISKA. Your happiness is but a dream—beware, lest I should wake you from it. *(storm gets louder.)*

GILBERT. (L.) Woman, or what thou art, I defy you.

ZISKA. Indeed! then you have sealed her fate. Farewell! you will remember me when I am no longer here to shield those you hold dear. Gilbert, your dream of happiness is at an end—let destiny take its course. *Exit, R.*

GILBERT. What dreadful words are those? Antonia! Antonia! *(storm rages very loud)* The elements seem combined to announce some dreadful danger near at hand. Antonia! I will seek her, and she shall not leave for an instant. *Music—Exit, L.*

Enter LAZARE and several FISHERMEN, R.

LAZARE. (R.) The vessel has struck on the rocks, and is going to pieces. Run, friends, and see if we can't save some of the poor devils on board—put out to sea, distinguish yourselves, and I'll stop here and report your valiant conduct, should you be drowned—for if we all shared the same fate, no one would be left behind to tell the tale. *Exit FISHERMEN, R.*

What a noble sentiment valour is! *(calling from terrace)* That's right—launch the boat—never say die! the eyes of your country are on you! I shouldn't mind saving one or two myself, if there was no chance of me becoming food for the fishes! Holloa! there's a poor devil paddling about at the bottom of the terrace! *(throws out rope)* All right—he bites! *(pulls away at the rope)* What a fine thing it is to feel oneself doing a noble action, and saving a fellow creature's life! Steady—steady, my friend—steady!

RUTHVEN appears outside the terrace, clinging to the rope—

LAZARE recognises him, and screams out, then pushes him back into the sea.

Help! murder! Santa Maria! murder! (R. corner, on his knees.

GILBERT rushes on, L.

GILBERT. What is the matter? (LAZARE making signs, not being able to speak for fright) Speak, Lazare—speak!

LAZARE. You're lost—I've seen him.

GILBERT. Him! who?

LAZARE. Bogy—old Nick—my Lord!

GILBERT. Ruthven! Impossible!

LAZARE. Not at all impossible—I've seen him as I now see

you. I think I ought to know him—I've seen his cadaverous face quite often enough in my dreams. I, like a great ass as I am, wanted to do an heroic action, and save a fellow being's life, and he was the object I fished up—what a bite! But you must be sure, when I saw who it was, I soon pushed him back into the sea. However, no matter—he's sure to come up again. Santa Maria! what will become of us? I can plainly see all our latter ends before us! (*Music*)

GILBERT. She was right—the dream of happiness has past, indeed! Leave me! (*throwing himself on chair*)

LAZARE. Most willingly. I only wish I could find a place to hide myself out of his way. I wouldn't mind the bottom of the crater of Vesuvius, only I'm afraid it would be too hot to hold me. I wonder what's the matter with my teeth—they will keep chattering against each other, and won't keep quiet—I'm sure I shall bite off the top of my tongue in a minute. Oh, Santa Maria! where shall I be this time to-morrow? no doubt a piteously mangled object. *Exit, R.*

GILBERT. (*starting up*) He shall take my life ere he harms her.

Music—about to rush off L.—Enter ZISKA, R.

ZISKA. Well, Gilbert, spoke I the truth?

GILBERT. Woman, being, or whatever thou art—for I have of late seen things so strange and incredible, that I have no longer faith in my own reason. Forgive my late folly in disbelieving you—behold me a suppliant at your feet. Save her, and I am yours—your slave for ever. (*falls at her feet*)

ZISKA. At last!

GILBERT. (L.) Let me not see a third virgin fall a victim to his bloody purpose. Shield my affianced bride, and I will bless you for having separated us—only let her live.

ZISKA. 'Tis impossible.

GILBERT. (*starting up*) Where is, then, your boasted power, since you refuse the only boon I ask.

ZISKA. 'Tis beyond my power to grant it. (*clings to him*)

GILBERT. (*casting her off*) Fiend! avaunt!

Music—Enter ANTONIA, in a bridal dress, L.

ANTONIA. I'm here, dear Gilbert—see my wedding wreath!

GILBERT. A funeral one would be more suited now.

ANTONIA. What mean these words, Gilbert—you are pale!

GILBERT. Ay, dear girl, curse me, for I have linked you to my fatal destiny.

ANTONIA. But we will fly if danger menaces. Besides, are you not at my side to protect me? What, then, have I to fear?

GILBERT. But he would seek us in the remotest corner of the universe. Has not this hand thrice laid him low? Oh, torture! but rather than see you fall a victim to his embrace of death, this hand shall rid this earth of both.

ANTONIA. I know not what you mean, Gilbert—but in life and death I am yours, and yours only.

GILBERT. Heaven bless thee! (*they embrace*)

ZISKA. (*up stage*) Can they love thus?

GILBERT. And now, dearest, let us offer up one last prayer, and then bid farewell to this accursed life for ever! I have here a deadly poison, which has never quitted me for years.

(*shows phial—ZISKA coming down c., and taking phial from his hand—Music*)

ZISKA. Stay!

GILBERT. You still here to gloat on our misery!

ZISKA. Gilbert, judge me not too hastily. Girl, leave us for awhile.

ANTONIA. (*crossing c.*) Oh, Gilbert, do not send me from you! (*clinging to him*)

ZISKA. If you would see her saved, bid her leave us!

GILBERT. But should he—

ZISKA. I swear, by the love I bear you, she shall be saved!

GILBERT. Can I trust you?

ZISKA. Can you still doubt me? Bid her go or it will be too late!

GILBERT. Leave us, dearest!

ANTONIA. Oh, Gilbert!

GILBERT. Fear not, Antonia, we can but die together.

(*Music—Leads her to wing, and kisses her—she exits, L.—*

ZISKA gazes at them, and appears to struggle with her feelings.
We are now alone—speak!

ZISKA. (R.) You would have died together rather than have lived for me. How willingly would I have changed places with her—But it is past, and I will now show you the extent of the love you have spurned. You shall live and be happy.

GILBERT. (L.) With Antonia?

ZISKA. Ay, with Antonia.

GILBERT. You can save her?

ZISKA. I can.

GILBERT. Why, then, allow my poor sister to be sacrificed?

ZISKA. I had not then the power I now have.

GILBERT. What means can be employed to preserve Antonia?

ZISKA. The only safeguard against the fiend, Ruthven, is to possess an amulet, a cross worn by one of his former victims. Behold it!

GILBERT. My sister's long lost amulet.

ZISKA. On the night of her death, I stealthily snatched it from her corse; I took it, thinking I might some day save an innocent virgin, and exterminate Ruthven—I little dreamt it would serve to save my own rival—but not a moment is to be lost. (*striking bell on table*)

Enter LAZARE, R.

Run instantly, and place this round Antonia's neck!

(*gives amulet.*)

LAZARE. But—

ZISKA. On your life lose not an instant.

LAZARE *staggers off in amazement, L.*

GILBERT. What does all this mean? (*Music*)

ZISKA. Ruthven's term of existence terminates this night at the stroke of twelve. Actuated by a feeling of revenge, he has but sought to make your bride his yearly victim—he waited for you at Tiffanges, feeling sure you would return there ere your wedding. He has followed your steps—and has her now, as he thinks, in his grasp—should he not discover his mistake till too late to seek for another victim, ere the clock strikes midnight, he is exterminated for ever.

GILBERT. Thanks—thanks! Heaven will reward you.

ZISKA. No, no—I dare not hope it! (*staggers to chair*)

GILBERT. What means this weakness—this pallor?

ZISKA. Can you not guess?

GILBERT. I will fly for aid.

ZISKA. No mortal aid can save me. In giving your bride life I sacrifice my own? Beings like us are bound by terrible bonds! In giving means to exterminate another, and betraying him, I but condemn myself to everlasting torture. I could have saved her, and yet have not sacrificed myself, had I not divulged who Ruthven was—but then, Gilbert, not knowing the obligation, you would not have cherished my memory as I trust you now will. Besides, I could not exist to see you in another's arms. (*falls on ground*)

GILBERT. Oh, Ziska!

ZISKA. I die happy, for I ensure your happiness, although it be with a rival—you, then, can judge if I did not love you! (*GILBERT kneels at her feet, and kisses her hand*) Thanks—I now willingly part with existence. Farewell earth! Pardon! Gilbert, pray for me—I dare not!

(*Music—She gradually expires—GILBERT kneels in prayer.—*
Closed in by)

SCENE SECOND.—*An Antichamber in the Villa.*

Enter SCOPETTO and MATTEO, L.

SCOPETTO. Well, Matteo, but what does all this mean?

MATTEO. Why, it's strange enough. First, down comes the Signor Lazare, and tells me to shut up all the doors and barricade all the windows, and to fire upon the first person who approached. No sooner had I posted myself in the garden, than a strange sort of gentleman hails me, and says, "Should you like to make your fortune?" "Of course I should," says I. "Well, then," he says, throwing this purse—(*shows one*) "find a sturdy arm to help you in carrying off the Lady Antonia, and twice that sum shall be yours." "But my conscience," says I. "Ten purses of gold if you obey, if not, this bullet through your head," says he. At the same moment I felt the muzzle of a pistol tickle my ear. Of course, when a person speaks in such enticing language, it's impossible to mistake his meaning, or refuse him anything, so I told him to get his ten purses of gold ready—and I came after you. Besides, we've not a moment to lose, as he seems in a great hurry.

SCOPETTO. But should this young Frenchman, the affianced husband, try to prevent our carrying out our plan!

MATTEO. Why, then, if words won't settle him, our stiletto must.

SCOPETTO. Nonsense, man, everything has its price, and ten purses of gold would buy all the consciences in Naples. So come along, and let's gain our money in a business-like way.

Exeunt, L.

Enter GILBERT, R.

GILBERT. I can hardly believe my senses at what has just past. Poor Ziska! thou hast, indeed, proved thyself a martyr to thy affection—for no sooner had she breathed her last, than her form seemed to melt into air, and left but a shapeless mass of clothing in its place. I will pray for you, poor martyr, and cherish your memory for having saved her whose existence was all to me on earth! (*a piercing scream is heard*) What was that? Surely she could not have deceived me!

LAZARE rushes on, pale and haggard, L.

LAZARE. Oh, oh! Oh, it's all over with us! there are more of them now, although I should never have dreamt that they belonged to the sect.

GILBERT. Explain yourself.

LAZARE. Why, no sooner had I done what Ziska told me, and placed that amulet round Ma'amselle Antonia's neck— By

the way, monsieur, did you remark that it was the very amulet that you had so long sought after?

GILBERT. Yes—go on!

LAZARE. Well, I had no sooner placed it round her neck—now what a sly minx Ziska was, never to tell me that she had it—than in walked those two scoundrels, our two servants, Scopetto and Matteo, whom I'd engaged for their good looks—they knocked me down, took up Ma'amselle Antonia in their arms, and off they bolted with her.

GILBERT. And you not to prevent them! Follow me! the fiend has not dared show himself. Heaven grant that Ziska has not deceived me!

Rushes off, L.

LAZARE. (*calling after him*) Don't leave me alone. I don't like it—it's past eleven, and nearly twelve o'clock, the hour when vampires walk about. I begin to think the world is half populated with them. I wouldn't stop alone for all the gold in the universe. Here, sir! Sir!

Runs off, L.

SCENE THIRD.—*A Churchyard by Moonlight. At back, an Illuminated Chapel. (All the lights down.)*

RUTHVEN discovered c., with the moon full on his face.

RUTHVEN. Will they come? If not, I am lost. This feeling of revenge towards Gilbert, to snatch his bride from his arms at the very nuptial hour has made me forget all else. But thanks to fate, she will be mine, and the year I wasted in seeking for her, and her alone, which has endangered my whole existence, will not have been idly spent. The chapel is prepared for Gilbert and Antonia's wedding—in a short time it will be a funeral, and not nuptial service, that will be required.

Music—SCOPETTO and MATTEO, L., bring on ANTONIA in a swoon—they place her on a bank.

MATTEO. Here, signor—you see we've kept our word.

RUTHVEN. (*with exultation*) Ay, nobly—and there (*throws bag of gold*) is your reward, and now leave me!

SCOPETTO. You mean the young signora no harm, do you? I should be sorry to see her injured, for she's a regular angel!

RUTHVEN. (*in a voice of thunder*) Leave me, I say!

They shrink off alarmed, R.

(*with exultation*) And now, Gilbert, we are quits. Your unknown protector cannot shield her from my fury—she is mine! I shall live to witness his anguish, his despair. Fate, I thank thee!

GILBERT. (*without, L.*) Antonia! Antonia!

RUTHVEN. His voice! then not a moment is to be lost!

(*Music—He advances towards ANTONIA to take her in his arms, when he suddenly starts, and seems driven back by a supernatural power*)

What fiend of hell has done this? She bears an amulet, which annihilates my power. Who has done this? I am betrayed—she is beyond my reach! Curse on this infatuated feeling of revenge, which made me neglect my own safety. I will hence—some other victim must be found ere the hour strikes, or I am lost for ever. (*about to rush off, L.*)

Enter GILBERT, L., with a drawn sword, opposing him

Let me pass, I say!

GILBERT. Fiend, repent! for your hour is at hand!

RUTHVEN. Never—let me pass! or this moment is your last!
(*bell begins to strike twelve—RUTHVEN present pistol, but on hearing the clock, starts—GILBERT takes advantage of this movement, and with his sword, strikes the pistol from his hand—he then rushes on RUTHVEN, gets him down, and presents sword to his chest—Enter LAZARE, L.*)

GILBERT. Repent, ere it be too late!

RUTHVEN. (*struggling for life*) Never! Curses on you all! Idiot that I have been! Ziska has betrayed me—but she has paid the forfeit! What forms are these around drawing me back? Mercy! back!

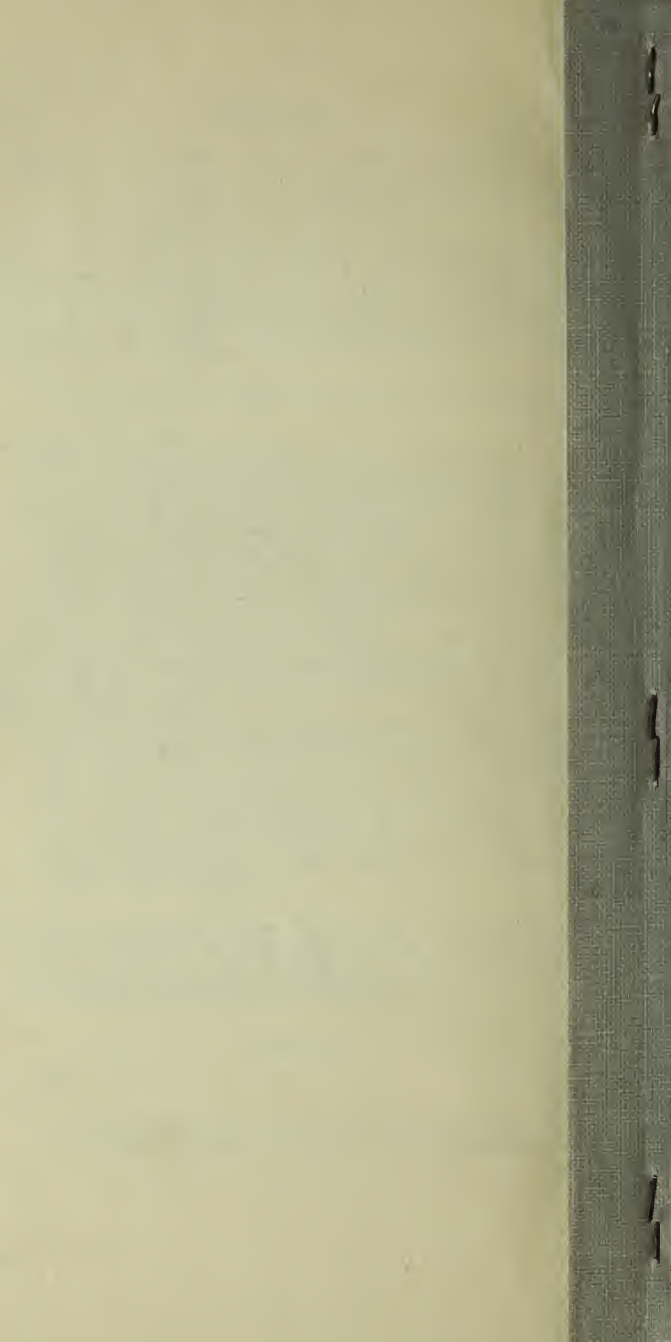
(*All this is spoken while the clock is striking—on the last stroke of twelve, a thunderbolt strikes RUTHVEN to the ground—a flame and smoke issue from the earth where he falls, and when it clears off, no signs are seen of him, except a flat mass of rags. LAZARE, GILBERT, and ANTONIA (who has recovered during this, and rushes for protection to GILBERT), shrink back with horror. Music changes.—The chapel disappears, and discovers*

The Heavens, in which is seen HELENE and JUANNA, clad in white, with their arms extended towards the GHOULE who, in the act of prayer, is seen gradually ascending towards them. The Tableau is illuminated by celestial rays.

CURTAIN.

R.

L.



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